

# The Red Garden

Henning  
Kehler







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THE  
RED  
GARDEN

NEW BORZOI NOVELS

FALL, 1922

THE QUEST

*Pio Baroja*

THE ROOM

*G. B. Stern*

ONE OF OURS

*Willa Cather*

A LOVELY DAY

*Henry Céard*

MARY LEE

*Geoffrey Dennis*

TUTORS' LANE

*Wilmarth Lewis*

THE PROMISED ISLE

*Laurids Bruun*

THE RETURN

*Walter de la Mare*

THE BRIGHT SHAWL

*Joseph Hergesheimer*

THE MOTHS DECIDES

*Edward Alden Jewell*

INDIAN SUMMER

*Emily Grant Hutchings*

# THE RED GARDEN

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH OF  
HENNING KEHLER  
BY FRITHJOF TOKSVIG



NEW YORK

ALFRED • A • KNOPF

MCMXXII

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MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



TO  
MY TRAVELING COMPANION



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## *Kerensky's Summer in Petrograd*

“**I**N the beginning was the Word!” Never has the word played such a rôle as it did in the hearts of the people of Petrograd during the summer of 1917. Kerensky, the man who won his fame on the rostrum of the Duma, was the hero of this summer, its chief speaker. The Revolution's Hydra devoured its own heads with its final, last and only one: Kerensky's. True to its need of a radical solution, Russia, in a great wave of feeling, washed away all revolutionary stages. Convention and regicide they would have none of, but they demanded their Napoleon at once, and, strong in the people's faith, Kerensky cultivated a vertical wrinkle between his brows and had photographs taken with his hand hidden in his breast. His career was as senseless as the enthusiasm that created it. In two months Minister, Premier, Commander-in-Chief of the forces on land and sea: Dictator. But it was too much for Kerensky, he swayed in his rôle as a child in leading strings. He grasped at history so as not to fall: I can see him sitting, drunken for want of sleep, turning the pages of his books to conjure up the spirit of the Emperor in support of his technique.

But the only real Kerensky was the orator. Only when speaking did he exist, then he was Cæsar to himself and the throng. Gradually as his nervous-

ness grew, he spoke more and more, until at last he spoke all the time: from windows, from balconies and church doors, from automobiles and at theatres, for Ministers, diplomats, delegations, soldiers, man and beast. He spoke with antique calm, staccato as Napoleon, harmonious as the Russian who draws his sentences out of his throat with the dexterity of a sleight-of-hand artist, and then passionately and feverishly as Kerensky, and at last screaming hoarsely and cutting off his words, his face yellow and distorted as a sick man's. He had long ago dropped his mask, and his hand raging in the air vied with his voice.

The Russian loves oratory and he loves to make speeches himself. Does not "*Slav*" originally mean "the talkers," the opposite of "*Njemtsi*" (the Germans) "the dumb"? In three months his enthusiasm for Kerensky was, as we say, boundless. But in reality it was brain fever, a holy frenzy in which the nation talked their tongues dry. To a Dane, popularity poured out in such dimensions, is like a display of natural powers. Words flowed from Kerensky's lips out over the land and sent new words into the world. They spread in milliards before the street corner winds, vanished in the cigarette smoke of the cafés and were aired out with the exhalations of Pullman cars. The newspapers printed them in blackface and capitals, spaced and half-spaced, small and ordinary type, and threw them out on the market in bundles that were taller than the boys that sold

them. Hundreds of people fought and tugged at each other to get a paper. They went from dealer to dealer to get all, as if they had never read before. And in a certain sense they hadn't. That which was worth reading in the old Russian press was between the lines and therefore escaped the casual reader. Skill was needed to write it and a clear head to interpret it. But now words had been liberated and the very ones that had been the most fettered were now used most frequently. People nearly lost their eyes staring at these words, that only four months ago would have brought about the suppression of the paper and life imprisonment in damp Schlüsselburg for the editor and his associates. People took possession of these words, played with them, rolled them on their tongues, and tried their worth as sounds and outcries, as ideas, arguments and abuse. The illiterate got the papers read to them by the more knowing who kept track of the lines with their forefinger and the still more learned afterwards expounded the text to its smallest detail. It was an orgy!—

Summer is never more summer than when a storm rises blue-black on the horizon. Under Petrograd's colourless sky a low thunder rumbled incessantly. All could hear and yet they didn't, as is true of all monotonous sound. But its result was bivouacked in the consciousness as a dull expectation.

At Haparanda on the Finnish border the exiles continued to stream back into Russia. Every train up through the Northland had during that summer its

flock of Russian revolutionists, whom one could not mistake amid the Entente diplomats and delegations and the ordinary adventurers and travellers. Napoleon's Old Guard was a Corps but this was no less so and the uniform they were known by was the fire of the eyes, the bright ashen pallor of the skin through the dark stubble, the thick lips, the hooked nose. Already in Russian Tornea they began their work. They were arrested, and held speeches for their guards. They spoke of their long exile in foreign lands, about the new world order, of the Revolution in danger, of that which must not be forgotten; of that which must be done at once. The women talked eagerly and wildly. When they had been detained a few hours or days they were let go again, for the Englishmen stationed up there, well, they didn't understand what was said, they were so used to all Russians being crazy; and the Russians felt that the strangers spoke well and there was no doubt that they were right but it was dangerous to listen to. Why, the safety of the frontier was likely to be threatened. So they let them go their way. They had turned the first spadeful.

The demonstrations continued in Petrograd. The masses had learned to like them during the revolution in February. At first the Russians found enjoyment enough in flocking together. It was something new, this going by thousands down the middle of the thoroughfare without needing to fear the Cossacks' *nagaika* at the end of the street. I have seen hundreds



of these citizen-and-soldier processions, with white, red or black banners, but otherwise not easy to differentiate; unceasingly they pass by, these faces, blue, unseeing eyes lost in the vegetative pleasure of mere walking. Does the animal predominate in these features as in those adults who have remained in the state of childhood? Or is it the childlike, as in small children whose intellect has not yet wakened? Impenetrable riddle—never solved by him who has lived among the Russian peasantry and cursed them daily while his heart was overflowing with tender pleasure in them.

At the head of the demonstrators was the music—The Russians will not march without a brass band. It played the *Marseillaise* in season and out, but not in French, that would have gone poorly with the Russian marching cadence, no, the *Marseillaise* had become the Russian national hymn. At night it was this *Marseillaise* that I heard before I went to sleep and the morning breeze bore it through the windows when I woke, now roaring nearby—now bits of it from distant streets, but always slow, as slow as if it were a dirge.

In the evening I often went out to *Kamennij Ostrof*. Here was the zoological park, at that time swarming with people, back of the Fortress of Peter and Paul. And here lived Lenin in the Kjesinsky palace; I was told that it had belonged to a ballet dancer, the Tsar's mistress; now it was Bolsheviki headquarters. A half army corps of soldiers, deserters and recruits lay and stood and walked about in the garden and the

court-yard, dawdling, loafing, waiting. Curiosity had brought us there, both them and me.

They waited apathetically for something to happen, which almost never did. Very few of them were armed, but there was a number of sailors, dashing fellows with smoothly-shaven skulls; they were always clean and smart in comparison with the troops of the line. The windows on the ground floor stood open and some naked rooms could be seen, where a pair of swarthy youths sat at a type-writer. The floor was littered with the husks of sun-flower seeds. Since then the sun-flower seed has gone its victorious way over all the parquet floors of Russia. The man who came unknown to Russia and moved into the ballet dancer's palace swept Kerensky away from the Tsar's writing desk and down the stairs of history. While it was summer in Petrograd and Kerensky talked, Lenin sat in darkness and enveloped himself in a myth. When folk no longer believe in God, they still hang on to the Devil. The Russian people had let the Tsar fall and had clamoured for freedom. Led by an unswerving religious instinct, it threw itself in the dust before Lenin and he put his foot on its neck.

## *At the Railway Station of Vitebsk*

**I**N January, 1918, I travelled to South Russia for the Danish Embassy to negotiate with the Ukrainian Rada at Kiev.

I departed from the embassy during a delightful snowfall at five o'clock in the afternoon. Petrograd is never more beautiful than when it is full of new-fallen snow and the sky is hidden by a woolly gloom which is snow that has not yet fallen. My train was to leave from *Nikolajski Vaksal* a little before six but I was forced to wait nearly five hours and my feet sang with the cold. I had reservations for the so-called "Staff Car," but I could not bring myself to leave and go into the waiting room because I knew that those who came too late, would have to be content with the accommodations in the aisle. Gradually over a thousand people gathered and shivered from cold and stamped their feet on the frozen asphalt. It struck me that those whom I judged had reservations for the special car appeared to be the most anxious. The others who knew that in any case they would have to ride one on top of the other were more unconcerned. The waiting soldiers formed groups and proclaimed to each other the fixed and settled political conviction that was theirs today, even though they could do nothing but shout a name: Kerensky, Nikolaj, Lenin and Trotsky.

But it was fully as amusing to see two joyous dancers, who, to the music of an accordion and squatting on their haunches, kicked their legs out from under them and vied with one another and laughed and sweated despite twelve degrees of freezing. It was a Czardas and a breath of the old Russia which has now hidden its face.

And when finally about ten o'clock the train came sliding into the platform, the human waves were such that it was an impossibility to keep one's feet. All had seized their bundles, knapsacks and teakettles; they rushed to meet the train and conquered it before it came to a stop. Luckily the reserved car had alert guards with fixed bayonets. A Bolshevik Commandant parleyed with the seat-seekers holding a revolver in his hand. But what a relief it was to get inside and find room and discover that the compartment was heated! How trivial everything else seemed, especially the fight outside! *I* was along, and was utterly indifferent whether we came to Kiev in two days or ten, knowing that *I* was lying in an upper berth and could feel the warmth creeping back into my toes.

The next day *I* made the acquaintance of my fellow travellers, an elderly Russian from Dvinsk, a Pole and a barely twenty-year-old Jew just home from exile in a threadbare suit of blue cheviot and broken boots, but with eyes that were fire. He was an Under-Commissar in the food distribution bureau at Petrograd, he said. We four had the compartment as far as Mogilov, staff

headquarters where Krylenko now resided after the murder of General Dukonin. The "Staff Car" went no further but, enough for the day—

The conversation turned to commonplaces now that events had closed the political discussion and Power once more talked solo in a new concise language. But we seemed to get along very well together. The Russian made tea, the Commissar furnished sugar, the Pole offered cigarettes and I cut up a roast chicken from the embassy kitchen. And as a stranger I was the only one who could engage in a more serious conversation with my fellow-travellers when I got them alone in the aisle outside, or occasionally in the compartment while the others played "Préférence," the Russian's favorite game, in an adjoining one. The Pole entertained me in polite French; everything he said was of a very secret and weltpolitik nature but as he was Polish I did not exert myself to remember what it was all about. With the Commissar I discussed Imperialism and Communism; he also spoke French. He was very courteous but there was a tone in his voice that reduced argumentation to a matter of secondary importance and although he spoke far from candidly it seems to me that it amounted to this: We Bolsheviki hate and we have the upper hand here and we mean to use our power and we shall get it elsewhere too and we won't fail to break the necks of all who oppose us, and gladly yours too, but everything is so very clear, don't you think: the Party is straightfor-

ward and unmasked, and those who won't die, can fight—There are many types of Bolsheviki, but this is the real and dangerous one.

I sat alone with the Russian one dark afternoon, while the train slowly rumbled over the flat White Russia plain that was as wintry white as its name and disconsolately desolate. I could only talk to him with difficulty, for at that time I knew very little Russian but neither was he very communicative. And yet he could not control his emotions but talked in a choked voice of the great Russia that had fallen. The tears rolled down his cheeks. Never among all the Russians I have met have I loved Russia more than in this middle-aged man, about whom I knew nothing but who sat here in the dusk and wept before me, a stranger. Is there any sorrow deeper than that of a plain man weeping for his country?

We came to Vitebsk in the afternoon of the second day after a tedious journey. The Commissar and I went in the station for something to eat. The way was very difficult, first up over a bridge and then down through a long tunnel. Although there was every possibility that the train would not leave for several hours and maybe not until far into the night, I was very uneasy and to be on the safe side I took my fur coat along with me. Taken all together, I have spent over four months on Russian railways and have never missed a train, but never have I been able to get rid of this nervousness.

The waiting room at Vitebsk offered a sight that can

never be made real for him who has not seen Russia. First that smell of leather and vile cigarette-tobacco, *Mahorka*, which has as its chief ingredient the stalks of the tobacco plant. An atmosphere that for the moment changes the surroundings to a dream in which the individual plays only an unimportant rôle, but which now—in reminiscence—has also been changed to poesy from a distant land. The entire third class waiting room was unbelievably full of soldiers. It would have been impossible to go through if one had not pressed forward without regard for the sleeping men and their bundles. But they did not stir; it takes more to wake a Russian.

Mass was being said in the corner of the room before a large image and many small ones. A *pope* chanted with his face turned to the ikon. The two big candles fluttered softly in their giant candlesticks. The priest was clad in a gold-worked chasuble and his long soft Christ-hair billowed over his shoulders; “Góspodi, Góspodi . . .” he sang, and a half dozen soldiers with fat, red faces crossed themselves devoutly when they heard the Lord’s name. Nothing would do for one of them but that he must down on his knees and kneel in the dust and dirt and sunflower husks.

In the first class waiting room, where the refreshments were, things were not much better. Every seat was taken. Other soldiers and officers, easily recognizable by their torn-off insignia and the cloth and cut of their uniforms, stood behind each chair



and waited their turn. The side tables and benches were crowded with sleeping persons but in front of them and on top of them were others who ate. And under the benches more soldiers were asleep. It seems impossible, but nothing is impossible when one *must* sleep.

We placed ourselves at a side table where it looked as if there might be room. The waiters bored their way through the eager crowd, greasy, sweating and shouting for room for the platters of piping hot soup and the ordinary Russian buffet dishes of roast goose and sucking pig. The whole place was enveloped in a damp fog from the food and the steam from the new-comers who brought the cold in with them. The two long tables in the middle of the room were a chaos of feeding heads, steaming dishes, green plants, refuse and tableware that might easily have been silver, at least I have so seen it elsewhere, for example, at Jekaterinburg, shortly after the murder of the Tsar's family and the flight of the Bolsheviki. Silver is no precious metal in Russia. In the background could be seen the buffet with its array of all sorts of empty bottles, a sad reminder of the good old days when you could meet in the waiting room and slake your thirst with a multitude of international drinks and liqueurs before the bell rang and you went back to the sleeping car and there partook of caviar and other good *Zakuska* and real *Vodka*. On a separate table stood the restaurant's Samovar; it was impos-



sible not to see it, it held water enough for three hundred glasses of tea and had to be brought to the boiling point every half hour during the rush periods. The glasses were filled in a hurry and there was no such thing as washing them.

We had given the waiter a three ruble note and as soon as possible he waved away two soldiers who had finished eating and we sat down on the further end of the bench. Some seven or eight persons were still at the table. On the bench on the other side of the table a sailor was sleeping or seemed to sleep. But no one bothered him. When we had gotten our soup, a young dark-haired officer just as handsome and distinguished as a Russian officer can be, was given a seat directly opposite the man. Sitting upright, the sailor laid his elbows on the table and with an evil look at the officer, began to pick his teeth. The latter did not look at him.

When the waiter had brought the young officer his soup, I could see that something or other rose in the sailor. He still stared at the officer but certain workings that came and went across his features told of a plan that he was turning over in his mind. The officer was absolutely unconcerned. Not the slightest movement in his face or the least change in his colour showed that he was annoyed. He made no attempt to ignore the sailor; he was as calm as if he were unaware of the coarse, hulking fellow who was trying to stare him out of countenance. I felt my face grow

clammy and thought to myself: you are deathly pale.

The officer had begun to eat and as the sailor made a slight movement of impatience, I thought; *now it's coming*; he's going to spit in the soup.

With a quick, abrupt gesture the sailor put his hand to his head and pulling out two hairs, he reached over the table and let them fall in the officer's soup. He did it without hurrying, almost lingeringly, and a hidden smile played about his mouth. The young officer did not try to stop him but merely looked up and met his enemy's eyes. The sailor leisurely lit a cigarette and looked away.

The officer ordered another plate of soup. No one at the table said a word while he waited. My Commissar was red in the face and his look told me that this was a case of lying low. I was the last man on the bench and four would have to rise before I could get out. I hesitated, and while I did so the waiter brought the officer a fresh plate of soup.

He began to eat as if nothing had happened. The sailor repeated his action and again let several hairs fall into the soup. As before, the officer made no attempt to hinder him, but he was pale as he looked up and there was a bright gleam in his eyes.

"I regret, *Gáspada*," he said in a melodious voice and with an easy bow to the table, but without looking at us, "that it's necessary for me to disturb you."

And before we knew what was coming . . . he already had the revolver in his hand . . . he shot the

sailor. I heard the report and heard the bullet enter and the sailor's head hit against the wall. He sat there for a minute with outstretched arms; in one hand he held a Browning pistol, and there where his right eye had been was a ghastly pool of blood and shreds that ran down his face.

While we still, horrorstricken, stared at the body, there came a second shot and the officer sank down on the bench. He had shot himself in the temple and the wound bled only slightly. His cap had fallen off and we could see his dark-brown, well-combed and rather glistening hair. His head had fallen on his breast and for a Russian waiting room with its many sleeping people there was hardly anything unnatural in his position. But directly across from him was the frightful, stiffening corpse of the sailor with its gaping bloody hole in the eye socket.

What happened afterward is not just clear to me. People jumped up, armed soldiers came, a commandant asked questions, we showed credentials, and the bodies were carried out. But by that time a number had already seated themselves and continued eating. Only the nearby and some women pressed forward to see what had taken place.

The Commissar was not long in settling things with the commandant and the two of us made our way back to the train. I was too shaken to notice how the scene had affected him, and in the short time we were still together we exchanged no words about it. But I

have retained the impression that he had me by the arm and led me in a manner as tender and friendly as if I were a little child.

The train left an hour after and in the evening of the next day we were in Mogilov, where we parted, and where I changed cars.

## *Russian Court Martial*

**I**N February, 1918, I was in Kiev. I was unable to make my way out of the city until the third day after Maravief's troops had dislodged the Ukrainians under Petljura. They were memorable days of murder and pillage, of heavy bombardment and of many corpses in the streets. Afterwards, for another seventy-two hours, sinister carts with dirty tarpaulin covers rumbled over the pavements. Above the sides, arms and bluish white feet protruded, both naked and in under-drawers. In spite of the hasty trot, they retained an unnatural stiffness loathsome to see.

The Commissar of Civil Affairs received in the imperial yellow place, situated on one of the city's hills, far above the valley of the Dneiper. During the war it had been the residence of Maria Fyodorovna. In order to get in, we had to go through the courtyard and pass the queue of many thousands of people who were stamping their cold feet in the melting snow and among the bodies of forty-five Ukrainian students and volunteers. They had been executed early in the morning, and obviously with steel, rifle butts and pistol shots. They lay where they had sunk to the ground in their last dash for life.

The queue continued into the palace through long corridors and several large rooms. The people were still a prison grey from fear and cellar life. To my

surprise I recognized under a tattered military ulster an eighteen-year-old Adonis from the Polish Legion, whom I had last seen flirting with his own fantastically uniformed reflection in the dining room mirrors of the Hotel Cosmopolite. Those who were waiting set up a howl when I tried to pass without taking my turn, but my guide repeated monotonously: "*Way, paschal'sta*, for the Danish Embassy, be so good as to make way!" In the innermost room, which was chokingly hot and crowded to overflowing, Tschudofskij sat at a big writing table, and near him three or four small, plump Jewesses clattered away at their Underwoods until it seemed that their fingers would fall off in the effort to satisfy the demand for the new identification papers that Tschudofskij without looking signed as fast as they were put before him.

Tschudofskij himself was a big, handsome Jew, about thirty years of age. He had kind brown eyes; his hair was thick and long, and his face pale from over-exertion and bad air. His cheeks had red fever spots. He hadn't shaved for several days, and his voice had dwindled to a hoarse whisper. If he let himself go, he would fall asleep on the desk at once. Although a Jew, he was enough of a Russian not to finish one thing at a time, but jumped from conversation to conversation, always receptive to the interruptions of the nearest bystanders. "At once, *Tavarisch*," he said to me. My guide persisted. "The Danish Consul," Tschudofskij repeated mechanically, and turned to me. "I speak ver' good Danish," he

interrupted me. He had lived eight months in Copenhagen in Landmaerket. He was willing to give me a paper that would guarantee my safety, but travelling permits he had nothing to do with. But he would give me a letter to a friend of his on the staff. One of the little secretaries took the letter from a dictation that constantly threatened to drown in a deluge of queries and answers. At last it was ready for his signature. "Go along Lutheranskaja. You will find the staff straight ahead on the Kretschatik." For a second his feverish eyes dwelt upon me, then the queue boiled over him again. But we toiled back through the rows of waiting people, past rifle stacks and machine guns in the vestibule, over snoring soldiers and out into the spring sun that shone on the yellow palace and the blue domes of Kiev, on the ice-bright ribbon of the river, and on the corpses in their blood.

In the evening I got away by the first train the Bolshéviki sent away from Kiev to Moscow after their conquest. It was to leave about ten o'clock from the freight station, as the Central Railway station still was a chaos of charred cars and other confusion. I took a droshky, but when we got outside the city and still had some distance to go, the driver stopped and would go no further. It was too dark, he said. So I had to pick up my bag and follow the tracks. While I was crawling back and forth among the rows of cars, I collided, literally, with a man, who turned out to be a Russian journalist, who had also

decided to take a chance. Finally we managed to make our way to the Commandant of the station. He congratulated us on being still alive. Every night, people had been killed by the marauders who roved around under cover of darkness, and had their lairs among the many thousands of cars. He had last night's bodies near at hand to show us, if we wanted to see them.

He was also obliging in other ways and gave us seats in a small special coach that was to take two high railway officials to Kursk. All night the train was being made up in a way that involuntarily caused us to collect our thoughts and consider the nearest danger. Several times we flew horizontally out of our berths and fell on the floor before we learned to remain lying there. Toward morning the train started. I heard a rattling of iron, it was the long bridge over the Dneiper river and swamps, and I felt I had escaped.

The next forenoon I was awakened by the fact that the train had not moved for some time. I tumbled out. It was a still, frosty day with sunshine on the fresh snow. We were at a little *Rasiest* or siding, about a hundred kilometers from Kiev. My traveling companion was already outside and talking with two lumber men. Our car seemed to be the cause of the trouble. It had reached the limit of its usefulness during the night and now threatened to derail the whole train. It was therefore uncoupled and probably is still standing where we left it. It was the only



decent coach in the train, which, as we discovered, was only a feeler for one which was going to follow with commissars and military, also going to Moscow. Hence our whole train consisted of troop cars that were filled with chance joy-riders who were travelling free of charge. With real sorrow we left our little coach where we had private sleeping berths and a salon with table and horse-hair sofa, to camp in a box-car among Tavarisches and Mujiks, deserters and peasant women. However, they willingly gave us the best places, after their first natural sulkiness at this addition to the company had died down, and exempted us from tending the fire, and in other ways showed themselves to possess unchangeable good nature.

Not until the next morning did we reach Kursk, where there was a stop of twelve hours. While we were waiting, an uproar arose in a car a little further ahead in the train. The cause of it was a peasant woman who with marvellous vocal display was accusing a soldier of having stolen a hundred ruble note—*zarskij djengi*—from her. I drew near the car. A large mob of the curious and of Red Guards from the station watch had already gathered around it. Suddenly the door to the telegraph office in the station was wrenched open and a Bolshevik officer, easily recognizable, despite his lack of shoulder straps, by his fine military equipment, bore down on us across the tracks, hurriedly buckling his long black cavalry sabre around him.

He parted the assembled throng by the sheer force of his expression of armed severity. "What's going on here? I, the Commandant of Stanzia Kursk, command immediate silence!" he shouted in the face of the peasant woman who hadn't ceased accusing her fellow traveller of the theft. "Arrest those two," he added.

The soldiers took the pair between them, and we all made our way to the station building. The inquiry was commenced in the Commandant's office. The entire room and the hall outside was full of people. The Commandant's voice sharply cut off all unnecessary talk. It was plain that the witnesses were against the soldier. They pointed their fingers at him; one had even seen him take the money. The accused was quite young, light-haired, pock-marked, and clad in the usual uniform. He answered unconvincingly and with rising confusion. No one recognized the name of his village which lay in the Tambof somewhere. "*Jebog*, I didn't do it, God knows I didn't do it," he kept repeating.

But now the Commandant ordered him searched. Two soldiers laid their rifles aside and began to go through his clothes. The result was put on the desk, and consisted of some lumps of rye bread, a salted cucumber in a newspaper, a piece of candle, a fine comb, a cigarette lighter made from a cartridge, and a small linen bag of tobacco. And, furthermore, some silver rubles and a gold fountain pen. But in the turned-back cuff of his overcoat were found sev-

eral hundred rubles in yellow and green Kerensky rags,—and a folded Romanoff hundred ruble note. The woman shrieked when she saw it, “And then the swine, whom God will surely punish, has crumpled it all up for me!”

The Commandant had turned red in the face. He broke off the squabble by rising from the table with a kick that sent the chair from under him. With folded arms, he looked at the accused peasant. The latter became still more nervous under the gaze which seemed to pierce him.

“That’s enough,” said the Commandant, after delaying a moment. “Give the woman her money. For you, Tavarisch, I can do nothing. Because of the activities of the White bands, the Kursk military district is considered to be in a state of war, and this provides for the instant execution of all thieves and hooligans caught red-handed. You are not condemned because of your offence, but out of regard for the safety of the Soviet Republic and the need of absolute peace and order behind the front in the merciless struggle against the counter revolution. I am only following my explicit instructions. Take that man out and shoot him at once.”

The Commandant had spoken with almost passionate politeness. His features quivered with determined inflexibility. He presented a picture of grim military beauty as he stood there. The upper part of his body was clad as in polished armour by a black leather jacket, decorated by the order of St. George

in orange and girded at the waist by sword and revolver. He wore long patent leather boots, and his strong legs were in dark riding-breeches with a red stripe.—“I didn’t do it,—jebog,” the soldier repeated, as he was being pushed out by the others.

A deadly silence had come over the gathering. They stole away, almost before they were told to. Nobody had been prepared for this outcome of an affair that originally had started as an attempt to amuse themselves while they were waiting. Who the devil could keep track of all the “states of war,” proclaimed now by one side now by the other? The one purpose always seemed to be to separate people from their lives without law and sentence and on the loosest suspicions. Anybody might walk right into it. Death up against a wall, in this case the lot of a nice, quiet fellow traveller, might just as well have hit one’s self. No one is blameless, and we are all sinners. And how little is needed to be in the minority and one against the many! This commandant had certainly exceeded the most daring expectations. He couldn’t take a joke. With all respect for the man’s formal politeness, this was much worse than being sentenced to the lash by a damned police officer, who first swore and then laughed mischievously in his beard.

But perhaps the box-car would have forgotten the man and his sad fate quickly, anyway, since the times had robbed it of any startling importance, if Babuschka hadn’t along toward noon laid her fingers on her own hundred ruble note, as she absentmindedly

dug down in her one red woollen stocking, in search of something that itched. Her consternation took on such overwhelming proportions that it could hardly fail to attract the attention of the others to her discovery. She shrieked aloud in terror and stared with drenched eyes at both her notes. Her uncontrolled repentance reached the furthest borders of that conception. But her weeping and contrition did not ease the others. Nor could they hide that they too were moved. A certain feeling of shame prompted them to give tongue and convert their energy into active contempt. Damned hag! She would get innocent people shot, would she? She was downright dangerous. An unanimous resolution lifted her out of the car, and she was dragged back to the commandant.

When matters had been explained to him, and the two notes laid on the table for comparison, the hard Bolshevik grew deadly pale for a moment. He gasped for breath dramatically, tore open his coat, so that a sweater was visible, and gripped the edge of the table. A tug at the red, braided lanyard brought his long Mauser pistol into his hand, and he looked at the crone as if he himself was about to shoot her down then and there. But instead he splintered the inkwell in front of him so that the ink squirted out on the table; he spat loudly in her face, and she in her fear ceased howling, and let her water fall on the floor with an unpleasant noise. His cap had fallen off, his hair clung clammily to his forehead, he gritted his teeth at her with an expression that said clearly that

death was too easy a punishment for her error which furthermore was an injustice to him.

When his rage had run its course, he continued to pace up and down the floor before the table. "What in the name of Satan shall I do with you, Babuschka!" he shouted to her each time he passed her.

"Góspodi, help me," she said just as often. Only the aid of the soldiers kept her on her feet.

Justitial doubts and clouds of anger passed over the face of the Commandant. He was really a prey to the deepest perplexity. In this instance, neither martial law nor his special instructions offered him any guidance. He had to act according to his own lights. A proper regard for his own dignity and anger, and for the righteous impulses of all these men, forced him to take the responsibility of a decision. "What in Satan's name shall I do with you, Babuschka?" he repeated. His voice had become quite gentle from pondering.

Just then a train slid into the station. It must be the military transport from Orel which had delayed so long and because of which the road had been held open.

"Tschort!" the commandant swore, as he lifted his arm to look at his watch. "Oh, in the name of the devil, take her out and shoot her too!" He picked up his cap, and pressed it with both hands firmly on his head, so that it sat with the correct slant, and erect and without looking right or left, he went out on the platform.

## *The Bolshevik in the Province*

**B**JELOF is in the Tula government, southwest of the town of Tula and only a hundred versts from Tolstoy's famous estate, *Jasnaja Poljana*. The region where the great writer followed the plough in his soft unbleached shirt and shiny leather belt, and where he went into the low huts of the peasants to leave behind him a thoughtfully forgotten gold piece, is rather commonplace, mostly beech-woods and flat land. The white buildings are neither plundered nor burnt. They look deserted; as I drove by, a score of glistening ravens flew up and left on the road the bloody bones of the carcass they had been rending.

But along towards Bjelof Nature unfolds a wider prospect. It was early spring, the snow had only just melted. The country-side was fresh and sunny, the earth grey and brown with large light-green spots where flocks of black sheep grazed. From a distance they lay on the land-scape as blots from a scratchy pen. Warm gusts came and went and towards noon it was quite summerlike, although winter might easily come once more before the real heat sets in and of a sudden everything is green and it is unexpectedly summer.

I came to Bjelof as it was growing dark. The only hotel in the town, formerly known as the "Metropol" had been requisitioned by the Bolsheviks for the use



of the peoples' commissars. I had the choice of only two inns, Rossiya and Francia, as two of the hotels in a Russian town are always called, and I chose "Francia." Thanks to my broken Russian and whole foreign appearance, I was shown into the best room on the first floor and given a candle. The furnishings were not much but doubtless sufficient: an old iron bed with a red-striped mattress, that looked as if it had gone through a great deal, a table and a chair—*bolsje nitchevo*, that was all. The washing facilities were in the hall and for the common use of six rooms. It was an old cupboard-like thing with a black tin basin and a tank, that forbade any wasting of the water.

The next morning I had a couple of eggs and a samovar served to me in the tap room; a cloth had been put on the table and from the spots on it I could study the quality of my hostess's soup. If I never tasted it, it was not because I doubted its goodness and fatness. Nor was it because of any natural backwardness due to the fact that the kitchen was separated from another fully as necessary room only by a screen, but wholly because it was in Bjelof that I was tendered a hospitality surprising even in Russia.

My visit in Bjelof—I found it necessary to get various signatures to my credentials before I went out on my mission to some camps for prisoners of war—developed as follows: Between eleven and twelve I went up to the former Metropol, a red brick building of about the same size and appearance as a



High School Home in a Danish country town. The street was guarded by the military who lay in the sun against the wall and slept. A light wagon drawn by a handsome grey trotting horse stood before the entrance to the hotel. The first room I came into harboured "The Third Internationale Executive and Agitation Committee of Bjelof for the Propagation of Bolshevistic Ideas among the Prisoners of War in Russia." Here sat a Hungarian, and a Viennese Jew, but evidently they were not the ones I was to see. The corridor on the first floor was full of people. They were petitioners and persons waiting to see the head commissar of Bjelof, sent out by the Soviets' central committee in Moscow—Mr. Rosenfeld, the very man I wished to get in touch with. As it was still in those times when a foreigner in Russia commanded just so much respect as he demanded, I went past the whole mob right into the audience room.

There were six or seven persons in the place, and it was a little while before I got my bearings. Two soldiers sat on a bed, with their rifles between their boots, and smoked cigarettes, and another man in a soldier's cape lay in a corner and slept loudly on a pile of cartridge belts. A pale man, with a face like yellow peas, sat at a small table on which there was a typewriter, and ate soup. In the middle of the room a man, whom I supposed to be Rosenfeld, without a collar and wearing long boots, was conferring with two tousled youths in the black blouses of the Russian Intelligentsia. Rosenfeld was a fattish Jew of about

35-40 years. I drew his attention to me by handing him a glazed card with all the titles which a foreigner travelling in Russia does not disdain to claim. Rosenfeld willingly let himself be impressed, he overwhelmed me with politeness and excuses for the untidiness of the place, with bows and noble gestures. He personally took a machine gun off an armchair that I might sit down. He was apparently figuring out something else while he studied me and my errand. The man with the soup was set to click off a flattering letter of introduction for me and Rosenfeld gave all my papers his personal visé. I rejoiced—only those, who have had the experience will understand the happiness that comes with each addition to the typewritten, rubber-stamped collection of documents, signed and triple signed by the proper Commissar or General and his secretary and adjutant of the day, without which one feels that he has no legal claim on life in Russia. I have had them all taken from me twice and both times I had one leg in the grave.

Although I conversed in Russian with Rosenfeld to the best of my ability, he willingly picked up the thread of the conversation in French, which did not better our mutual understanding in the least, as he knew still less French than I did Russian. The two pale youths were presented to me; they were the commissars of sanitation and of the commissariat. The sleeping man in the corner had awakened and had furnished himself with a sword and revolver. He

turned out to be the commissar for the war department, the *Voiniskij Natjalnik* of the town. Rosenfeld, himself, no doubt, had charge of the finances. I was the Danish Ambassador to Russia.

But now Rosenfeld got up and declared that I must go along with him to the court-house and meet all the important personages, the "heads of the town." He swept the papers together on the table and flung open the door for me, and we went past all the waiting petitioners, widows, wives, girls, soldiers, pensioners, discharged officials, etc., whom Rosenfeld with preoccupied gestures told to come again the next day.

The trotting horse was at the disposition of Rosenfeld, and things went by in a hurry as we drove up to the court-house. Rosenfeld introduced a great number of eminent men to me. He had much verve and I was not unaware that he wished to dumbfound the whole community with his phenomenal savoir faire, so that they could not help but get the impression that the town was greatly blessed in Mr. Rosenfeld, who was a man of breeding, a man of the world, who knew how to handle a ticklish international situation with tact and dignity! Rosenfeld spoke French over the heads of the town dignitaries: *Oui, naturellement, avec plaisir, très possible, voilà* and *c'est comme ça*—the same incontrovertible truths that hold so much consolation for the débutant Legation secretary.

I was invited for one o'clock luncheon at the former civic club, where the not too Tsaristically inclined citizens now were the evening guests of the Bolsheviks.

Large placards, printed in red type, glared conspicuously and proclaimed that the Agitation Committee and the Committee for Public Education had arranged moving pictures, dancing and an exhibition of modern dancing for every evening and for Sunday evening a masquerade with a prize for the most fetching gown and the most beautiful woman. Times may change, Red may take the place of White, but the exertions of the revolution or of the counter-revolution are equally rewarded by the popular approval of the garrison philanderer's heroic and well-dressed appearance, and the conqueror swings in the dance today with the glowing girl who will be cradled in a new victor's arms tomorrow.

Rosenfeld came to lunch with a collar on but without a tie and wearing a somewhat dilapidated dinner coat that I was sure had figured before in the club on some dapper officer. There were two others there, apparently the wealthiest of the town dignitaries, whom Rosenfeld particularly tried to flatter and honour, and me with them. Their names were Vasilij Maximovitch and Ivan Ivanovitch—their last names I have forgotten but if I once more come to Bjelof, I will be just as welcome in spite of that. The first was a handsome, though very fat, old man with venerable Jewish features and snow-white hair and beard. He wore a Prince Albert coat and soft elastic-sided shoes. Maybe he wasn't a Jew, perhaps he had been baptized in this or the past generation, at any rate he crossed himself with all the ritual which, like

all concessions to formality, gives the real Russian so much charm. His voice, however, was the most characteristic thing about him, it was at once impressive and subdued and full of fat organ-like notes, as that of an actor who has grown old in worthy traditions and good food. Ivan Ivanovitch was on the other hand a pure merchant type, of peasant stock, and not for nothing the richest man in town. His blinking eyes ran with both drink and slavish sweetness and falseness; they told of experience in life, that on his part was complete and hardened in exercise of all those vices known to the Old Testament.

The luncheon was lavish, and I was hungry. We ate steadily for three hours. Rosenfeld had brought two flasks of whisky along in the pockets of his dinner coat and in the middle of the meal a soldier came with reinforcements in the shape of a bottle of the kind that the Russians call *Tschetvert*, holding from two to three quarts. It was filled with pure alcohol, which the waiter and the soldier under Ivan Ivanovitch's kindly and interested advice prepared with a little water, a bit of cognac, some sugar, herbs and some similar asafetida, after which it was run through a sieve and at last was as smooth and strong and aromatic as the imperial vodka itself. The soldier sat down at the table and drank too and then I noticed for the first time that it was the military commissar.

Rosenfeld drank as I have never before seen a Jew drink, he sweated great drops and with each minute grew paler and more unshaven. He led the con-

versation, that is to say, his mouth was never still for a moment; the two old men ate and drank and were more reserved. Vassilij Maximovitch drank only the official toasts and regarded me with smiling benevolence. Ivan Ivanovitch glanced at me slyly and drank to excess as if he wanted to get drunk, if that were possible. The commissar was a coarse-grained young man, who drank boastfully, spilled his liquor, and became offensively drunk at once.

When we had had our dessert, preserved peaches and apricots, the two merchants drove away, after Ivan Ivanovitch earnestly had gotten the others to explain to me that I was invited to a dinner in my honour, at his house that evening. He would absolutely not concede that I understood a word of what he said. Rosenfeld lit one cigarette after the other and dozed.

"Very rich people," he said suddenly, "very rich people." He took out an old, greasy wallet, that split and gaped with money, old Tsar money with pictures of Catherine and Peter the Great, and new Kerensky thousand ruble notes. He smiled at me, an intoxicated augur's smile and said: "I am the finance commissar—and here is the treasury, three hundred thousand rubles—that is more than I used to carry with me when I was a longshoreman at Le Havre and London—before the Revolution. But the wallet is the same."—"It's better to keep it on you these days," he added and put it back into his breast pocket and grew thoughtful again.

I slept on the red mattress at the Francia that afternoon but at half after nine Rosenfeld came with the trotter to bring me to the dinner.

Ivan Ivanovitch's house lay back of the market place. The warehouse was in front and back across the court yard was the dwelling house with a pair of wooden stairs running parallel to its façade. There were a number of large rooms and very little furniture but many green plants, standing in wooden tubs in the middle of the "great room." In the corners were big collections of old ikon images with a fine patina, and new ostentatious pieces flaming with gilt.

The guests had already gathered. There were eighteen and each man was peculiar in his own way. If one was too tall another was too short, if one was yellowish and had red pimples, another was red and had yellow ones, if one was long-haired and saddle-nosed, another was thin bearded and cross-eyed. It was a company that Dickens would have raved about on his death bed. There was a postmaster and a *Volost* writer, two notaries and three teachers from a girl's school, a former *pope*, and a discharged intendant with his fingers full of diamonds, a landed proprietor without property and a sailor from the Sebastopol fleet. There was a man in an undershirt and striped trousers, a commissar in a black blouse and with a general's red stripes on his light blue trousers. There were some in long boots and some in tennis shoes. The atmosphere was dignified, careful and, if not oppressive, then sensitive to what might occur.



Every one had his best clothes on and moved sideways along the green rubber plants without as yet feeling each other out.

The *Zakuska*, the obligatory Russian hors d'oeuvres, was laid in the dining room. On a long table that stood up against the wall, there was placed an unsurveyable amount of food. There were seven kinds of sausage, three roast geese, great stacks of pancakes, and bowls of sour cream, deep cups with butter sauce, white and red and pink salmon, not thin slices from a delicatessen store, but enormous full sized fish, rolls stuffed with soup herbs and onions and chopped meat, red and yellow salads, small roasted birds, smoked eels, quivering suckling pig with *Smetana*. There were fish in oil and fish in tomatoes and caviar—grey, glistening caviar, reared up in mounds of small hail in tureens, old milk cheese and whey cheese, mountains of bread and a clay dish with white, unsalted butter that was still moist from the churn. There were many decanters with white and yellowish vodka and looming over it all, a metre-high samovar surrounded by large and small glasses, smooth and fluted glasses, crystal glasses, and glasses of green bottle glass, glasses from the good old days and wartime glasses.— I came from Petrograd where people and dogs in the course of a night leave only the hooves of a dead horse on the cobblestones.

Ivan Ivanovitch filled the schnapps glasses three times and then the tea was carried around by a pea-



sant lass in down-at-the-heel slippers and with a wool shawl around her head for the tooth ache. The company had already livened up considerably at the sight of the food and, loudly conversing, patronized the long table without urging. There was a man to take care that the glasses were kept filled and the decanters replaced, and when he became drunk another servant took his place. Ivan Ivanovitch drank the health of all the guests who in turn toasted each other. After the *Zakuska* we remained sitting for a short time and smoked cigarettes to settle our food before we started to eat dinner.

The table was set in the "great room." The green plants had been moved together at the windows. It was a large table and its extreme bareness did not make it look any smaller. There was absolutely nothing on it besides twenty unmatched glasses full of red wine, a plate and three utensils per couvert, together with a salt dish for common use in the centre of the table. There were no napkins, no dishes were changed and no finger bowls were given. *Serevno!* as the Russian says when he is, as we say in Copenhagen, indifferent: there was food.

First the filled Vodka decanters were set on the table and then we sat down, and the soup was carried around in dishes, yellow, steaming soup, too fat, strong and spiced. There was a hunk of beef and a piece of fowl in each portion. After that, fattened veal roast with greens, then wood-grouse,

already carved, but the pieces, even to the dead eyes and beaks, had been skillfully joined together again. Brownd potatoes, red cabbage, pumpkins, cucumbers, whole plums, quinces and numerous kinds of jelly. It was a dinner where the old hackneyed saying of the best being none too good took on a deeper meaning.

Rosenfeld, who sat at the middle of the table on my left—on my right I had my host's daughter, Vjera Ivanova, who was *Intelligentsia*—spoke in my honour. Modesty forbids me to report its more personal parts, but he felt honored to bid the representative of a friendly nation welcome on behalf of the town. He knew that his sentiments were shared by all those present—Denmark was a small, democratic country, her people the most lovable and liberal on earth, unfortunately the police still spoiled this idyll by their dirty reactionarism—and then too he loved Copenhagen, a city he knew from personal observation, wonderful place. *Tivoli, Adelgade, smokke Pige* . . . of course he spoke Danish too, (and then we all laughed) . . . he would propose a toast for little Denmark and great communistic Russia!

Ivan Ivanovitch had ordered the glasses to be kept filled to the rim . . . he tried to embrace me . . . his eyes glazed and ran with a sharp clear moisture. As I, somewhat embarrassed at being the company's centre of attention, eased Vjera off me a little, I saw through a fog eighteen reddish-

purple or greenish-pale faces turned to me and distorted in a meaningless roar that made the dogs in the yard bark for a long time after.

I remained standing and responded with an appropriate toast to the Russian woman, who loves so much, that much shall therefore be forgiven her. Vjera leaned her ringleted bobbed head against me, as I spoke. She was constantly in need of much help. She said she could not stand to drink very much. She wanted so to learn French, she had studied it at school but she only knew *un petit peu* . . . she also wanted so much to know me better, and she pressed my hand and looked at me with large lovely eyes. . . .

For some reason or other there was a disturbance among the many drunken people at the table. The sailor drew an enormous Browning pistol out of his back pocket and banged on the table with it. As by a stroke of magic, a silence that was broken only by the barking of the dogs fell over the table and every one glanced warily at each other, at Rosenfeld and at me. Rosenfeld was drunk to be sure but he dragged a heavy automatic out of his pocket and said to me: "We've *all* got those—a little helper comes in handy now and then." Smiles were again unbound and suddenly all had their revolvers out and sat there and chatted, explaining and sighting. It was a remarkable collection, from long horse-pistols to pistols from the Crimean War, and small silver-mounted ladies' revolvers, Austrian of-

ficers' pistols, Mausers, small Brownings without pistol barrels, that one could hold in the palm of his hand, and Smith and Wesson revolvers with rotating magazines. This lasted until Ivan Ivanovitch once more had the glasses refilled and the incident was forgotten.

There were still a number of speeches—I remember that Rosenfeld spoke in honour of Vassilij Maximovitch, who sat, fat, white-haired and dignified, directly opposite me and neither ate nor drank much, but enjoyed the veneration of the gathering in such a matter of fact way that it was strengthened by it. I got the impression that it was he who led the others, as sheep, that obey blindly. Rosenfeld spoke for a long time, grandly and lyrically, with an abundance of adjectives that described Vassilij Maximovitch as Man, Citizen and Capitalist. It was with men such as he that the people's commissars had to and wished to work—he was a great philanthropist, even in the Tsar's time he had donated 25,000 rubles to a school for girls, and now because the school had never been finished during the corrupt Tsaristic reign, he had renewed his gift with twice the sum. He was a true man of the people. To be sure not yet a communist in principle, that meant nothing,—he understood the new times—both he and Ivan Ivanovitch, who recently had paid a biggish fine for illegal traffic in liquors, had shown that they were good co-workers in the cause of liberty and progress. He, Rosenfeld, did not underestimate Capital,

it is our enemy but we need it to carry through our plans.—Long live the generous and noble Vassilij Maximovitch!

Then Vassilij Maximovitch spoke of Rosenfeld with deep feeling and with elegant diction that was accompanied as by the twanging of a bass string by his fat, full voice, and when he was finished they kissed each other on both cheeks. And Rosenfeld spoke of Ivan Ivanovitch—and others spoke, who sprang up on chairs and on the table: no one knew his voice for his own. The table-cloth was littered with refuse and dripped with alcohol, the room was hot with human breath, smoke and the penetrating fumes of liquor. Two great cream tarts were carried in but no one took heed of them, all walked about or stood up and presently took their places at the table again.

I remember still that we had some strong cognac with our coffee and that Ivan Ivanovitch persisted in trying to drink to me and kiss me on both cheeks. It was Russian, *po russkij*.

I felt his whiskers and breath singe my face and pushed the drunken man from me.

Vjera had disappeared, and the sailor, and various others that I did not see again.—Rosenfeld drove me back to the Francia.

The next afternoon we had a parting luncheon at the house of Vassilij Maximovitch. Rosenfeld came and woke me; it was necessary, he said, Vassilij Maximovitch would feel offended if you did not

come when you had been at the house of Ivan Ivanovitch.

At Vassilij Maximovitch's, I saw Ivan Ivanovitch again, looking the same as usual, and the other guests of the night before. Their faces were swollen as if they had been in a fight. Vjera was there too and now for the first time I noticed that she was pregnant. At Vassilij Maximovitch's we also had every possible kind of cold dishes and there was Vodka for Ivan Ivanovitch and a mild sweet fruit brandy for the rest of us. Everything went along in a dignified way and only one speech was made, one to me by Vassilij Maximovitch. When we had eaten and I was about to go, Ivan Ivanovitch embraced me and bade me come as his guest for as long as I wished. Vassilij Maximovitch too I had to promise to come again. And Vjera shook hands with me and blushed.

"Come again," she said, "some other time."

The wagon waited below with my baggage. Rosenfeld had gotten me two good horses and a reliable driver and at a spanking trot we drove, with bells tinkling, up the street, across the market place and out toward the country. My friends waved as long as they could see me.

Soon we were outside the town and when I looked back, I saw Bjelof hovering in the air like something seen in a dream. Here from the wide open country all that I saw of it was the long white wall about the old convent, the green roofs, the blue and golden domes. Russia, unforgettable, beautiful Russia!

## *Village Bolshevism*

**T**ERAKOVO lies on the crest of a hill in the middle of the wide open country. Seen from a distance it resembles, especially in the springtime with its grey, clay-daubed outhouses and numerous wooden peasant huts, a geological component and natural elevation of the landscape. It has an enormous expanse and is really a city in the country with five or six thousand souls. It is not merely the collection of building blocks arranged as dwellings for lesser hucksters and craftsmen around the railway station, the church and the creamery, that we since the flight of the people, call a village.

In the middle of the town can be seen—still from a distance—a large bald spot. For some mysterious reason the houses have given way before and around this broad space, where the clay bank is allowed to show its naked body, yellow and steep from the spring streams of melting snow. But close at hand we see that it is only the road.—The road through the Russian village which from old custom broadens like a river and which in case of fire and favourable winds offers the possibility that only half the village will burn. If one rides from Galicia or Poland by horse and wagon, it is neither the landscape nor the people, the colour of the cattle, nor the amount of filth that tells us when we have come to



Russia. It is this broad street in the first Russian village that with a new and lavish conception of space ushers in the great, Asiatic, unused and turgid mainland of which Europe is only the peninsula.

I came to Terakovo in the early summer of 1918. I came at noon. It was burning hot and the village was hushed and still. Dogs and big rough-haired swine lay in the shade of the houses, black-spotted and dirty-white, and among them tow-headed children with open mouths. Everything living slept, singly and in bunches, where the heat and sleepiness had surprised them in the comradely study of the mysteries of the road and the manure heap. Now and then the wagon joggled over a pair of young pigs who had made themselves comfortable in the deep ruts that the carts had cut that spring in the slough of mud. The wheels ran over them lengthwise and they let out heartrending squeals and then stood awhile and pondered whether or no they should do any more about it. Finally they decided to go to sleep again. In the middle of the village we came by the traditional little stone chapel in which varicoloured and gilded images were protected from the rain by a roof. We reached the end of the village street unnoticed. A large plot of long-stalked sun-flowers surrounded the last houses and their green leaves excited Nature's already withered yellow into a burning orange tone that shrieked aloud with thirst.

During my visit to a big internment camp for prisoners of war that lay a half score versts further



east, I learned a good deal about the peasants in the village and how freedom had come to Terakovo.

The revolution itself took place very quietly, the only sign of it in the community was the disappearance of the gendarme. He had been surprised by soldiers at the station of Bokoruzka and some said that he had been killed, but others were of the opinion that he had gone back to his village on the Volga and one would yet hear that he had become a commissar. At first the children wondered because he was no longer there, much as we should wonder if one day the sun didn't rise, but would no doubt in spite of that still go to our work in the court and in the bank, send off our letters and read the newspapers. For a long time no excesses took place except that the peasants cut wood in the forests of the estates without taking pains to hide it. Later they became bolder and broke through the fences of the park and cut down a number of old elms, sawing them off a good yard above the ground to make it easier. The children, who before had gone to school on the estate twice a week, now took a vacation. When the deserters began to come home, the general's wife and daughters no longer dared to walk in the garden. They were insulted and at night stones were thrown through the window at them. They became so terrified that they fled to Moscow and then the manor house stood empty. Now the depredations came in rapid succession, the manager fled and it grew worse as more soldiers came home. They related that at

the front the officers no longer had command. It was the soldiers themselves who decided whether they would fight and everything else and there was a council, a *soviet* in each battalion and higher up. Also, many strangers had come from Petrograd and from far foreign lands who spoke much and spoke well. They said that now peace would be made all over the world by the private soldiers, that the officers were paid by the rich to make war and let the poor be killed so that there would not too many of them but now no one would be rich or poor any more and no one would own anything in the future but everybody would own all. The German soldiers would not fight any more either and there was no doubt of it because they came up out of the trenches and waved white flags. And not only was there no shooting of each other any more, but they talked together and the Germans had Vodka that they bartered for tobacco and they gave fifty rubles for a rifle and two hundred for a machine gun. And furthermore the strangers said that all the land that belonged to the estates would be divided among the peasants and all that the rich in the country possessed was the property of the poor. It was strange talk and a new order that came home to the village, but much of it sounded very seductive and was not hard to grasp and it was accordingly brought into execution.

First the peasants took up the task of dividing the land. It had suddenly become unreasonable to put off until tomorrow what could be done today.

The older peasants in great excitement walked around on the unfenced areas, calculated by rule of thumb, paced off distances and began from the beginning again when they lost track of their count. For the worst of the work a sort of surveyor from Ardatof was fetched. It may not have been absolutely fair but neither was it wholly unreasonable. It so chanced that the rich peasants got most. But sufficient consideration was given to those who were still at the front or who were prisoners of war. They had families who looked out for their interests.

When the division of the land was at an end, conscience and remorse awoke but along with it was the desire to own and bequeath the good land that had been won so easily and free from debt. The rational thing to do was to get rid of the evil and danger at its root. Realistically endowed as the Great Russians are and with their feelings shrouded in such dim clouds, it did not take the peasants long to come to the conclusion that the estate should be destroyed. In this way would vanish the apparent and material possibility that the masters would ever return. After large and repeated councils in front of the church, action was finally taken. The animals on the estate were the first to be parcelled out. This was an involved exchange and one that took many weeks before it came to an end, as the old miracle of the loaves and the fishes did not repeat itself at this unholy occasion. As every family had to have its share of the cattle and horses, they found

it necessary to dig down to their own hens and geese as small change in order to bring about a settlement. And when a sow gave birth to a litter and a mare had a colt while the division was in process, a new and unexpected strife arose as to who should have the offspring. A great prize stallion proved to be an unsolvable bone of contention. There was nothing left to do but to hit it on the head and divide the skin and the meat. In this way peace and justice were given all due consideration.

After the animals came the turn of the farm machinery. But most of it would not do for the ordinary husbandry which still does its work with the sickle and the wooden plow. So on that account they were broken up for the iron in them and the pieces dealt out. The less heavy furniture and household articles were also divided up and in the library any one could help himself if he felt so inclined. Of course it wasn't easy to figure out what the books could be used for and for that reason I could buy, in Terakovo, at *postojanoje dwor* where I drank tea, the 15th. volume of *Balzac's Oeuvres Complètes* and the 67th. of Voltaire's for fifty kopecks each. When there was nothing left on the estate that could not be used in an ordinary peasant's house, the place was set afire and when I saw it only the blackened walls with their sorrowful window openings were standing. The trees too, nearest to the ruins, were badly scorched but nevertheless green

branches here and there strained upwards after the sun. . . .

Bolshevism had conquered; not its teachings, its ideas or its leaders. It conquered in the action by which the village burned its boats, and at the same time burned its complicity into its own, stupid, sluggish heart.

The peasant is not Bolshevik; he is nothing. He has only ordinary ideas and conceptions of privilege. He believes in a Tsar. *Kozjain nada*, says he, for he knows that even the smallest undertaking needs a master. Then too, under the Tsar there were manufactures and real money. But if the Tsar was the empire and religion peace and quiet, he was also domestic discipline, punishment and reckoning. Towards Bolshevism the peasant feels an instinctive distrust; it is new and has come in a time of misfortune. And yet he does not declare himself against it, for it is a guarantee against the gendarmes and the cossacks, against retribution and the reinstatement of his former rulers. Reason, the inner voice and tradition were arrayed against the emotions and the nearest danger. And the emotions won as they always do. And while the peasants wait on the future and bear the day's burden and wait with a heavy and silent heart, they prudently let the vast new fields lie fallow. One can never tell—and it would indeed be a sin and shame to waste the seed and let the master reap what the peasant has sowed.

But it was no use letting gloomy thoughts dwell on the morrow. The new times were not without the joys of the moment. As for example when the big distillery in Ardatof was plundered. Home made whiskey is good enough for ordinary use of course but in the Tsar's good old Vodka, none of which was sold during the war, there was nevertheless more festivity. So when the peasants in Terakovo heard that now things were wide open at the liquor warehouse in Ardatof, they started from where they walked and stood and lay. On horse, foot and in wagons, the women and children last, but all dragging, riding and driving with all they could bring with them of piggins and pails, jugs and jars. Many thousands of people were all headed for Ardatof as if to a great fire or to a Kazanian procession for the Virgin Mary. They drank well and fast and long but there was so much more Vodka, both in gallons and in bottles and in pure spirits in barrels in the great warehouse, than was possible to drink at a stretch, even if all were to and did get thoroughly drunk. Much was spilled during the debauch and the whole distillery was destroyed, but still there was a great deal left and some of it they tried to bring home to the neighbouring villages. Outside of Terakovo, two wagons broke down under the weight of the mighty liquor barrels. The wheels went completely to pieces and the liquor ran out on the field where for a long time it lay like an entire lake before it drained into the ground. But many

who had not gotten so sufficient a supply and who were thoroughly addicted to drink, opinioned that it was a shame that so much good stuff should go to waste. They set about filtering the earth through which the liquor had recently sunk and the result of their labours was a not inconsiderable quantity of a yellowish and somewhat earthy fluid. To be sure, it did not taste quite as it should but it had an exhilarating and powerful effect for all that. After several days' happy partaking of this drink the parties concerned were stricken by a slight indisposition which however quickly developed into a species of typhus. This typhus took on so many complications that according to an Austrian regimental surgeon, a prisoner, who had the opportunity of observing this disease on the spot, the patients galloped through most of the internally treated sicknesses ere they became blind and raving and at last began to rot before they really died. In this way over five hundred people died in Terakovo in the course of three weeks—.

Before I left the camp at Terakovo I witnessed a catastrophe that may not be unusual for Russia but which for a stranger involuntarily becomes a remembrance. Terakovo caught fire. It happened as I shall now tell.

A Hungarian lived in Terakovo who went by the name of Ivan. He was not the only prisoner of war in the village but he occupied a distinct place and it was a long time since he had been a common servant and thrall. The peasants held him in high



esteem. Among other things he had, when the land was being divided, shown a fund of knowledge and ability that had been of benefit to the whole village. He was a handsome, dark-haired fellow, that I can say, although I have only seen his corpse, and he was the father of a number of children around in the village, which could not fail to knit him more closely to the families. He finally married a soldier's widow and took the place of father to her two children about the same time that she presented him with a third one of his own. He had adopted the orthodox belief and wore under his shirt a cross suspended from a string around his neck just as the real Russians. Also he was a good friend of the *pope* for whom he procured beer and old vodka from a commissar in Ardatof. He spoke Russian so well that it was difficult to hear that he was a foreigner. When he married the widow the peasants made him a member of the *Mir*, the village society, an honour very rarely shown extra-parochial Russians. Yet, I have spoken with two other prisoners who had had just as good fortune as Ivan; having while the war still was going on, been accepted in their village as real peasants where they could have married had they wished. Ivan had, during the division of the property, been given the position of arbiter. And as he constantly represented the means of procuring for the village through barter with his friend the commissar in Ardatof, sugar and tea, nails, calico and similar scarce wares, his position



and authority were, in consideration of his age and extraction, quite unusual.

Now the dramatic, which in Russia is commonplace even if it is elsewhere rare and hard to believe, happened: the husband, Sergeij Petrovitch, looked upon as dead, came home to the village. He was sallow and yellow as a corpse but otherwise quite alive. He had been in prison in Kiev and had during that time been sentenced to death for some breach of discipline but had been pardoned or forgotten. At any rate no one heard from him. When the Bolsheviki in February, 1918, occupied Kiev, he was released together with all the other prisoners. After three months of wandering and interrupted travel by train, he had now reached home and demanded that which was his.

If he had come back as a ghost he would probably have been met with sympathy and understanding. Ghosts as a rule are harmless and easy to get along with. As he came, a living apparition, he was highly inconvenient and unwelcome, and he barely won their tolerance. There was entirely too much that spoke for his having remained away. Even his old friends gave him the cold shoulder and turned away when they saw him coming. His own children did not know him and his wife sought shelter back of the Hungarian who looked right through him and around him but did not let him come in. He slept in an outhouse and there at least the dog licked his hand as of old that of the returning Odysseus.

The third day after his arrival he went away and when he came back he was armed. He had a rifle on his shoulder and his pockets full of cartridges. He entered his house and shot the Hungarian with a revolver. A bullet pierced Ivan's neck and severed his windpipe. The body he threw out on the street where it lay for a long time and was a source of nausea to the inhabitants, while the hogs gathered and bit at it.

The woman, who carried her and the Hungarian's baby at her breast, Sergeij did not harm and she met fate with bowed head. Ivan had been more handsome but still Sergeij was her first husband and her only one now that the other was dead. And undeniably to him belonged the hut, the land, the livestock and the lives of her and her children. For all parties concerned it was best that she and Sergeij agreed and agreeing kept that which was theirs.

As for the peasants, well, they remembered that that which is done can not be undone and despite regret they were not disinclined to accept the accomplished. In that respect primitive diplomacy is not one jot behind the most modern. Now that he, Ivan, was dead, it was on second thought also more apparent that he had been an outsider and a prisoner of war, while Sergeij was Russian and born in the village and obviously in the right.

But Ivan's friend, the commissar in Ardatof, felt the loss of his comrade of battle, and of war imprisonment, a fellow countryman and a useful con-

nection in Terakovo. He was burning to revenge the murder and came to Terakovo himself with thirty Red Guards and a machine gun. When the peasants perceived that neither contributions nor requisitions of grain were wanted, and that their lives and their property were not threatened, they concluded to render the stronger part friendly neutrality. To this point of view, the growing feeling that Sergeij had at Ivan's death come into an inordinately large inheritance, very naturally contributed.

Sergeij's house was surrounded and while the Red Guards consulted among each other as to how they should begin, a shot suddenly crashed out, followed by others and in the same instant a soldier toppled to the ground, dead. The others at once took cover. After many hours of careful skirmishing and advancing, Sergeij had run out of ammunition and they were able to dash in and make an end of him.

Inside the house the wife and the two half-grown children lay dead. Whether Sergeij had shot them or they had been struck by bullets from without was never cleared up. Either was possible as the hut was as full of holes as an old target. Only the Hungarian's infant still lived; it lay silent by the side of its dead mother. It would have undeniably have been more convenient if it too had gone hence but—*schto djelat*, what was to be done about it? It lived and took its place as a belated twin at a peasant girl's breast.

But the same afternoon the village burned, that is

one half of it, for the wind was favourable. Sergeij had set his hay afire before he gave himself up to the revenge of his enemies. When the flames were first seen bursting out of the barn it was too late to put them out. All hurried to their homes, to drive out the cattle, save the children and the samovar and what else there was time for before the fire hemmed in all it could reach with its swift, clamorous flames.

I got there just as the fire was burning fiercely and on this occasion I heard the whole story from a Viennese who had been in the expedition against Sergeij. We stood outside the town and watched it burn. The Viennese was deeply moved and said a number of times, sighing: "If only people could live at peace with one another!"

The conflagration itself was less impressive than the descriptions usually given that kind of occurrences by writers, who in sheer eager imagination let themselves be enticed into the fiery ocean and see it all from within and in the middle of the element's blustering fury. I, outside where the wind blew away from me, saw nothing other than a dark, gigantic wall of smoke from the depths of which came a monotonous soughing. Once in a while the smoke was tinged lilac or violet but no flames were visible. If any horrors were taking place within, we saw nothing of them. Once a pig came running out of the smoke and right at us. It was black but it may have been so by nature and there was apparently nothing the matter with it. When the fire was at its height

we saw nothing other than a bright, almost white haze.

That, which burned, burned thoroughly and to the ground. Nothing but ashes on the bare ground was left of one half of Terakovo. Of that which had been caught in the fire, as for example the bodies of Sergeij and his family, scarcely a trace was to be seen. As soon as the next morning the peasants were walking gingerly over the warm earth while they poked in the ashes and pushed at the blackened, partly-plastered stone foundations. They searched for the places where their houses had been and had great difficulty in finding them. But most of them no doubt had a little treasure of gold, silver, or copper money and old Tsar notes buried somewhere. And that which is underground does not burn.

Before I went away I stopped to see the Hungarian's child. It was a little boy with beautiful brown eyes and hair that was already dark. He smiled, which Russian infants hardly ever do. He lay in a basket that hung, suspended by a string, from the ceiling of the room. I bade the young foster-mother take good care of him.

And if he isn't dead, he is still living and will some time become a little wave on the crest of the ocean, a life in the swarm of humanity and a soldier in the host which Russia will once again raise when it resumes its march to the sea.

## *Russian Cavalry*

THERE is a window open in a house on the fashionable and palatial *Millionaja*, aristocracy's street in Petrograd with the golden, clinking name. The air between the red and yellow walls is full of clattering hoof-beats. A lancer regiment is marching by on its way to the parade ground at the Winter Palace where it is to pass in review before it leaves for the front. The colonel rides first. But he is no old, peace-time colonel with white whiskers, high red collar pricking his chin, drooping stomach and gouty toes cramped in his riding boots. The commander of the regiment is a dashing and khaki-coloured warrior whose moustache curves like a dark sickle against his sunburnt face. His breast is covered by various grades of the Order of St. George with their black and orange ribbons. Two narrow rows of brightness carry the French, English, Belgian and Serbian colours and on the tunic below his heart, the red Vladimir sparkles. The heavy sabre, doubtless an heirloom, with its long silver hilt and black leather scabbard with Caucasian silver-work, is set off by his black riding breeches and brand new patent leather boots. He is riding a black thoroughbred that looks as if it might at any moment execute a dance on its hind legs and roll its eyes coquettishly and foam at the bit, while it in reality goes along

like a lamb and only for appearances' sake does it jump sideways and make the spurs necessary. On the colonel's left rides the adjutant, tall and slender, handsome as a young girl's dream. He wears a shining cross of the Order of St. George and on his shoulders the long white braids with their golden tassels. Red and white vie in his complexion. His face is open and yet slightly dreamy. Its insouciance is bathed as by the glow of a recent parting. A parting he has already forgotten.

Next ride the musicians with their Balalaika instruments and after them the entire regiment passes by, great strong fellows on small Russian horses. The first section of each squadron carry the long lances at their backs. These are weapons that can be seen, this forest of thick poles that in slanting lines rule off the sky. Some of the lances have streamers but most of them are bare and only the short steel points flash in the sunlight. The other section have only carbines but all are armed with the Russian cavalry sabre, yellow and black, hanging from new raw-coloured leather bandoliers. The majority of the horsemen are young men, long downy-lipped country boys, blond and red haired, almost white haired, pock marked, freckled or covered with ripe pimples; their features are about as flippant and mischievous and thoughtful as slices of French bread. But among the many grown up man-pups who still gape unrestrainedly at the world through their light blue goggle eyes, ride small com-



pact Tartars with blackish-brown polished eyes, smooth hair and a latent fatness hidden in the nice rounded cheeks. And here and there ride types of the pure Mongolian with flat noses, dark-yellow cheek bones and wiry pig tail shocks of hair, and on the extreme flank ride real horsemen, old cavalrymen with their caps set precariously on back of their heads while their thick hair in front is combed forward in an oily and ringleted lock that hovers over their forehead like an immense hair puff or stiff streamer and divides the impression of their owner into warrior and petticoat pensioner.

The first squadron ride brown horses, the second have black, then come the brown again. The fourth however, is composed entirely of white horses—only the little colts that run by their dams, tripping and shambling along, with their comical canine body swaying on the four long soft legs, provide an occasional variation in colour. But before them, of course, the cavalry regulations are powerless. The small, Russian horses are said to be too light for the big cavalry onslaughts where weight determines superiority and outcome. But they have the sweetest short noses and long manes that hang into the kindest and most patient eyes. No other animal deserves the love of man more than the little Russian horse that trots faithfully along without ever stopping to think that its rider too has legs. It endures treatment that would strike the larger stall-fed horses with a score of incurable ailments. . . . It stands



out in the coldest of winter with a snowstorm literally on top of it. It is thoughtlessly used, misused, beaten and starved and never balks but is equally undismayed and kind-eyed up to the day, when face to face with the moment's impossibility, it stretches out its legs to die, as unostentatious and unassuming in death as it was during its life of toil. And yet—on an attempt to pet it and rub its nose, it turns its head away and one becomes aware that the Russian horse does not understand that kind of familiarity because its instinct for caresses has never been awakened. The mares foal every year and their colts, too, are something apart. They are not like other playful, lazy, light-hearted colts that roll on their backs and waggle their legs. From the very moment of their birth they are a collection of small, shaggy, reticent creatures with wise old eyes, that totter along where their mothers go and if born in the regiment, run, on the march, in war and to parade along the column's flank, generally mouthing and drooling, engrossed in the one thing that to them is life's infallible meaning; to be abreast of the good mother milk should there be a pause in the march.

Now the Balalaika band plays. But it is no martial melody they play, for in that sense the Russians are no warlike people. They can be put into the ranks, but at heart they are wanderers. The songs they know are the sorrowful and little varied hymns that with fascinating melancholy still convey some of the repetitive rhythm of primitive people. This

music acts with entrancing and suggestive force on the most sluggish soul and penetrates all the culture of the sophisticated. As it fills the heart, it opens vistas of the great plains with their many hundred thousand homes, of the mainland where Volga the Great Mother flows, and of the vast steppes where the Calmucks and the Kirghiz still shift their tents. And when the Balalaika dies out, singing is heard from the regiment, first a leading voice and then a little chorus, in which the individual is still raspingly felt, and then the whole regiment joins in and the raw primitive voices mingle in a solemn and mighty chant, quite the opposite of any student singing society in its naïve vocal abandonment to that no thought and purpose which is the festive mood in all folk song.

After the squadrons come riders with led horses, and field cars with hay in large, flat pressed bales, wagons with arms and equipment, horses with machine guns on their backs and more carts with lances, brass instruments and ammunition boxes and last the field kitchens, horses, men, and more wagons and little colts. And when the whole procession had passed and the street again was quiet, a belated rider came darting by on a little horse. He posted in his saddle like a rubber man, not a beat behind the animal's movements although the horse flashed like a dark flame over the cobble stones, its mane flying in the wind, the sparks spreading fans of fire where its hoofs struck and raising a din like a minute-long

storm of hail and thunder. They can run too, these small Russian horses, they place their small strong legs to the pavement like slender steel rods beating in raging tempo, where the big dragoon horses would wince as if their hoofs were corns supporting their own oat-stuffed weight.

Thus the Russian cavalry went to the front.

A year later they came home again. It was during the days of the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. The war was over as far as the Russians were concerned, long before peace was signed and irrespective of whether it ever would be. A special commissariat sat in Moscow and demobilized the army, but the regiment came back to Kazan, where it had its permanent garrison, in two Tjepluska trains which it had requisitioned and brought through by the aid of a few and effective gestures with revolvers when the track could not be cleared quickly enough. There were ten horses in each Tjepluska and the soldiers were installed in cars, which if one could judge by the Roman numerals, had at one time been first class sleepers but when they arrived in Kazan only the walls and that which was nailed fast remained of all that at one time had been plush and pillows, conveniences and bathroom porcelain. From the station they rode up the *Voskresenskaja*, the main street in Kazan that reaches from the university to the old Kremlin with the Tartar tower. The dashing colonel was missing, the adjutant not there either. No

officers at all were to be seen, for those that possibly might be left, had no more shoulder straps or marks of distinction. In front rode a red-headed soldier and on a black thoroughbred was a sailor in a navy cap with long yellow and black ribbons, a seaman's blouse and wide uniform trousers. It was a curious sight to see a sailor on horse-back and the animal reared and snorted under him but he sat as if moulded to the saddle and conversed imperturbably with his companion. He carried no other weapon than a heavy Browning at his belt. The squadrons were now made up without regard to the colour of the horses but went according to the friendship of the riders. No one carried lances any more, why drag along those heavy flag poles that were anything but fit for offensive purposes. The majority of them, however, had secured pistols which they wore in holsters strapped to their waists, preferably gendarmerie revolvers with a bright red lanyard that went from a ring in the butt up around the neck. It appealed to their love of colour and made such a fine ornamental effect.

The regiment clattered up the street in all kinds of gaits and paces. The horses still kept place where they could but the men were impatient and broke ranks to get by one and ahead of another, or they suddenly turned their horses and rode back amid tumult and laughter and abuse. Many rode up on the sidewalks and banged gaily away with revolvers and carbines. The bullets whizzed through

the air in all directions and some flattened themselves on the chimneys while others crashed through the windows and knocked the plaster off ceilings on the third floor. The colts were nearly crazed during this bedlam and pandemonium and were constantly becoming separated from the mares. And the people of the town fled panic stricken around the corners or if they had not gotten quickly enough away, pressed themselves up against the houses, pale-faced and praying that this terrible cavalry would be well past before harm came to them.

When the horsemen reached the barracks on the outskirts of the town, they rode their mounts right into the stables and up into the stalls and remained in the saddle while they put halters on the animals and made them fast. The wagons that were left were run together in a bunch in the court and there they still stand but sunk in the ground to the hubs. The machine guns were set up in the gateways and then all started investigating the barracks. First they ate and drank what could be discovered and prepared in a hurry and celebrated their homecoming and the new liberty, equality and fraternity and then made preparations for spending the night. The sailor and the red-haired one took the colonel's bed. They sprawled right in between the white sheets in clothes and boots, spurs and weapons and the others lay down to rest around in the officers' room. But many too, merely collapsed in the officers' mess or wherever they happened to be and slept it off with their

heads on the table and their legs on the floor or with their heads on the floor and their legs on a chair.

As long as there was plenty to eat and drink in the barracks, a tremendous uproar continued to come from it all day and far into the night. The inhabitants of the town and all those who held life dear, kept at a safe distance from the revels that so easily became excesses. One day three bullet-riddled soldiers were brought to the hospital and something like a half-score men were hastily buried, the outcome of a fight that arose over some trivial misunderstanding. The barracks were in a frightful condition, the eagles had been torn from the doorways, the windows were knocked out or shot full of stars, the white plaster had fallen off the walls in long flakes, the furniture was splintered, the pictures in the officers' mess served as a lodging place for bullets, and where that of the Tsar had hung was now a picture of Lenin, fastened to the wall with four thumbtacks. The superintendent who had been surprised by the regiment on its arrival had fled and lay hidden in a cellar in Kazan. He said that the church had been dumped full of manure and that the *pope* had been tied up in the wheelwright's smithy where he had sat and licked axle grease, before he was allowed to slip away, half dead from hunger and thirst. But the regimental physician, who had always been a coarse rascal, the wild fellows had fetched from the town and manacled to a sentry box

where he remained until one day he was accidentally shot.

Gradually, however, the homecomers disappeared. The Tartars had immediately gone to their homes; the Turk is methodically cruel but all Bolshevik excesses are foreign to his phlegmatic nature. The rest went, singly and in small groups, home to their villages. The leading Bolsheviks had long ago moved into the town and lived at hotels or were quartered at the houses of the rich citizens. Others also got greater or lesser commissions in the administration of the local commissariats or of the soviet government. At last all were gone and the great barracks, waste and empty, and with a strange burnt out appearance stood in its desolate field.

But the uproar did not abate, on the contrary, it continued, and increased. It became a heartrending and terrible howl, an uninterrupted finale of shrill screams, that might have been the neighing of evil spirits who had into the bargain been stricken with raging insanity, and yet it was only the horses who stood forgotten in the long stables and tugged at their halters and when they gave way, galloped back and forth, trampling down all that lay in their path, flaying long shreds from each other with their long flat fore teeth, their eyes bloodshot, and no longer animals in their frightful sufferings from hunger and thirst. The people in the town heard and some of them wondered perhaps, but who in the



world was going to risk his life first for the madmen who might still be holding sway out there, then for the still more insane animals which the devil himself could not approach in the condition they were in now. And who was going to procure the hay, and who was going to pay for it, and whose business was it anyway—and besides the noise soon grew weaker and at last died quite away and people no longer gave a thought to the barracks, where no one now had errands and which not even attracted thieves after the regiment had gotten through with it.

But a month later, as the weather became warmer, the town again had to remember the barracks and what had really happened there, for certain winds carried a frightful stench through the streets, yes, into the very house. It became so bad that the commissariats had to take a hand and three or four hundred prisoners of war, of those who had not already enlisted in the Red Guard, were hurriedly driven together to get the carcasses out of the way. It was a hard task, the ground was yet too frozen to bury them, the stinking bodies had to be brought out of the town in carts to be flung on a meadow down by the Volga. It may be that a prisoner or two fainted and some died too, but then prisoners of war die so easily and nobody misses them and anyway some one had to do the work unless all were to prepare themselves for the worst.

Those who sailed on the Volga past the town of Kazan in the summer and autumn of 1918 could have



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seen great flocks of birds circle over a certain spot on the north bank of the river. It is here that many carcasses were brought to to their last rest. Here I myself have seen for the last time the regiment of cavalry that I first saw from a beautiful woman's window, as it went to review before the red Winter Palace. Most of the bodies were already plucked of all flesh and the last bloody shreds were drying in the summer heat upon the white skeletons. Fat ravens still sat on the gruesome skulls and picked at whatever puddles of decayed matter there was left. It was a beautiful evening, but an ugly sight to see these many stripped and eyeless skulls guarded by these brazen and imperturbable feathered creatures, and yet my thoughts turned most to the little colts that were always so unreasonably sweet and which I always wanted to pet but who always drew their heads away and wouldn't understand what it was all about.

## *Galician Jews*

**I**T was in the spring of 1917 that Denmark, replacing the Americans, took over the interests of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in Russia. Such is the diplomatic expression and the last link in the official chain is the increase of foreign grand crosses and orders of knighthood in the court calendar. The reality that lies between is a book the size of the Bible, a gigantic tragedy and a comic epos, a robber romance, and a *Divina Commedia* that took place in Hell on earth. There were several millions of statistics of which only a few still exist. Among my countrymen in the foreground I remember people with honest faces, also people who looked like scoundrels, hypocritical climbers, and swindlers with the Red Cross on their arms, many adventurers and very few heroes.

It began with letters that in increasing streams poured over the writing desks of the embassy. Letters from prisoners of war, from officers, from soldiers, from prison camps and labour battalions, from jails and coal mines, from Murman and Bokhara, from Habarovsk on the Pacific Ocean to Krasnovodsk by the Caspian Sea. Letters that came from Austro-Hungarian subjects whom the Russians at the outbreak of the war had held back, deported or interned by the thousands or whom they had later

dragged along with them on their successive retreats into Galicia and had sent further east to Siberia and to the stretches of the Volga.

I still dream with strong distaste of the mighty piles of fools-cap, generalia and personalia, of the complaints and pleas for aid, most of them carefully worked out in fancy handwriting either with small, fine latin letters or large gothic flourishing ones, in round and upright writing with spirals and curls and all the massive etiquette of Austrian bureaucracy on both sides of the sheet. But there were also others that were written with difficulty and mis-spelling on small-chequered letter paper and where the Right Worshipful Sir in the salutation was replaced by the poor man's naïve: "*Gnädige Herr Konsulat*"!

But the contents were known before the letters were opened for it was always distress and loss and dire straits and prayers for help and favourable intervention. It was about scurvy and frost bites, pay that was never received, and mail that was never sent; about brutal Cossacks, swindling camp officers, invaliding home and exchange. It was of sick who could not get operations performed and others who demanded credentials, and there were requests for loans and impatient questions as to when the war would end. In Ust-Syssolsk they had no bread, in Tambof the civilian prisoners were not allowed on the streets after six in the evening, in Petropavlovsk the privates among the officers refused to salute their officers, in the camp at Totzkoje half the camp were

dead of spotted typhus, and in Krasnojarsk were fifteen Austrian officers who had been transported from Moscow to Siberia in fourth class coaches!

I remember the young civilian prisoner who wrote that he would soon be dead of tuberculosis but would like to marry his fiancée in Klagenfurt ere he did die. And the *artiste* at Rostof who at the outbreak of the war had lost all his registered baggage, twenty automatic dolls with complete wardrobe . . . and Dr. Gold, I remember, the very important Rechtsanwalt and politician, Dr. Solomon Gold who every week day sent out a calligraphed communication taking up four pages to hasten his exchange with the illegitimate son of a grand-duke and two pensioned Russian generals whom the war had surprised in Carlsbad. . . . Every day new affairs that resulted in new notes on glazed paper in fine French style with indexed corners. Notes that without humour and also without bitterness always ended with a request to receive an answer *aussitôt que possible*—and also long after we had come to know that no favourable answer could be written. It was a task one did well not to put too much imagination into, but neither is it in that manner that one advances in the diplomatic service.

No one wrote so often and so pitifully as the Galician Jews. When I think of these I must still ask myself what miracle of earthly stupidity possessed the Russians to send as many of the Galician Jews as they could manage into holy Russia and its de-

pendencies. As if they didn't have Jews enough and weren't weary of them. But there is only this explanation that just as certain people must sneeze in sunshine so the Russians could not stand the sight of a Jew without at once decreeing over him and moving him about. During the war large portions of the German and Jewish population in Poland and the East Prussian provinces were forcibly sent toward the east and now this whole extra Ghetto from East Galicia came here, mostly old men, women and children, for the young men were of course mobilized. Many had seen their homes sacked or burned over their heads by Cossacks or by Hungarian husars, which was still worse. Naturally there was privation and wretchedness among them and they possessed a marked dislike of dying unnoticed.

They wrote continually, on all kinds of paper, in Russian, in Polish and in German and with a great deal of Yiddish among it no matter what they wrote. I venture to guess that they wrote to all the possible Jewish relief committees in the world from New York to Cape Town, from Copenhagen to Valparaiso. They wrote to the Red Cross and to the authorities of the Russian government, high and low, near and distant, who were not awakened by much louder uproar and who not even in their dreams would have done anything for them. They wrote at last to us, their official accredited guardians within the Russian frontiers and described in monotonous expressions their hunger and their sorrow, their sickness and bare

legs, their rags and their lice and how all had been stolen from them and they had been allowed to earn nothing. It was a lamentation and a moaning that always went to the extremest borders of suffering and ended with sworn assurances of death's quick coming, signed by Leib and Aaron, Amster and Löbl, by Regenstreif and Sonnenglanz, Tichbein and Rubenstein. If it hadn't been laid on so thick it would have moved a stone.

About New Year, 1918, shortly before the peace at Brest-Litovsk, the repatriation of the prisoners not of military age began. At first only those who were able to pay at least part of the travelling expenses, were allowed to go. By thousands then, Austro-Hungarian civilian prisoners from all sections of Russia and all the way from far Siberia, streamed to the embassy at Petrograd and also to the consulates at Moscow and Kiev. And none came more quickly than the Galician Jews. In the old rococo palace in the Sergievskaja where the Hapsburg ambassador had resided, they stood in thick swarms on the old parquet floors that now were warped and cracked from want of care. They overflowed out into the corridors and were camped all the way down the stairs with their bundles and trunks and the Pole, who with a pale face and clammy from nausea, looked out for their passports, nearly gave up the ghost from powerless Anti-Semitism. To be sure we could have had a Jew in his place but then it would have been impossible to hear a sound for the squab-

ble that would have arisen, and time was precious. Now they were content to exude an indescribable and perfectly absurd stench, the stench of the Ghetto, and if it had not been for that, we from the north, who never before had seen real Jews, would have thought it all a dream where the people of Israel, who await the descent of Moses from the mountain, mingled with the portraits on the walls of Aehrenthal and Franz Josef and with Ivan, the lanky, uniformed "Swiss" at the door of the embassy. For there was Jacob with his son Benjamin, and there Samuel, and there the red Aaron and there the faithful Eliezer, and yonder a Prophet and here a Pharisee. Pale Jews and Jews with long beards and curly front hair, black and reddish Jews, noses, eyes, and flat feet, dignified Rabbis who held their gowns together about them, "spitting" Jews and old handsome Jews with their entirely white hair in cork-screw curls and with rings in their ears; every one of them a true picture of old Isaac in Ivanhoe whom the cruel Norman has his black slaves lay on the red hot gridiron. Jews in top hats, in peaked caps, in sable-brimmed plush hats, in Astrakhan fur hats, all in high boots and robes of wonderfully good cloth, and yet as they all stood there together, with an unmistakable stamp of almost ragged poverty lying in the soul of their blackish-brown eyes.

How many of these Galician Jews secured passports and got home that spring, I don't know, but I believe it was the majority. And many continued to

be left. When I, in the early summer came to *Simbirsk* on the Volga, there was still a great deal to be done in securing passports for those civilian prisoners who had not yet gone and in dividing the not plentiful funds among the most needy. Without my good secretary, Dr. Josef Diamond, lawyer and hostage of war from Stanislau, I should never have gotten along but would have become an easy prey to my credulity and sentimentality and would no doubt have gone raving mad from giving ear to the accusations that the civilian prisoners made against each other. Of hidden wealth, unlawful sources of income, swindling and embezzlement, in short of unbounded dishonesty, not excluding bigamy, feticide and murder. But Dr. Diamond knew the civilian prisoner and the mysteries of his life. He spoke Ukrainian with the Ruthenians, Polish with the Poles, German with the Austrians, Russian with the Rumanians and the Hungarians, and Yiddish with the Jews until both parties were wet in the face and had to wipe the sweat out of their eyes. He knew who made money by unlawful traffic in liquor, who by usury, who by speculation in merchandise, by peddling, by trading in gold, silver and precious stones, by gambling and by honest work.

He knew who constantly postponed their departure because they were making good money where they were, and who came and begged for assistance despite the fact that they had accumulated tidy little fortunes. He knew when a civilian prisoner had



had caviar, a three course dinner and coffee with cakes at one and a half rubles each, at the "Passage" hotel; who were thick with the Bolsheviki, and who were members of the Red Guard where they got 300 rubles a month, uniform and complete maintenance, of which the daily three pieces of sugar could be sold for 50 kopecks apiece. He knew what girls did not need 30 rubles a month for support inasmuch as they wore silk stockings at 75 rubles a pair, and no Jew, however wretched or ragged he might be, could moan his way to assistance if Dr. Diamond's legal nose had smelled money on him. Dr. Diamond did a great and unpleasant work for a modest salary and his impulsive eloquence often placed him in situations where he was called swindler and scoundrel and he actually received threats against his life. Then he became very frightened and for several days would have the doors locked and let no one in unless he knew his voice, and he talked with pale composure and great seriousness of giving up his position. But one or two days after his voice and liveliness had again their old resounding strength and he appeared again in one of those virtuoso-like cross-examinations in which he brought unworthy applicants to silence and badly hidden shame. I sat in an adjoining room where I had all the advantages of being outside and when Dr. Diamond had ended by declaring in a sudden sugar-sweet transition that after all it wasn't up to him, no one could reproach him in any way, for he was only

a humble servant, a secretary and an instrument of a higher voice and of course every one was free to try to advance his case with the consul himself, then there was, after Dr. Diamond's exultant indiscretions, very rarely any one who had any desire to talk to me, who—and who could tell—might be still worse.

Only once did Dr. Diamond burn his fingers, but it was excusable: it was his heart that ran away with him. Among the civilian prisoners we had an old blind Jew from Limanova who had been in Russia since 1914. He had only lost his eyesight a year before we came however. We presumed that he also had, before his misfortune, known how to turn a pretty penny just as the other civilian prisoners who unexpectedly had seen their crafty aptitude and more West-European initiative invested in surroundings of virgin Russian laziness and sleeping sickness. But of course we knew nothing for certain, for Galician Jews do not carry their riches where they can be seen, if they have any and yet after all it was perhaps only as so much other envious innuendo, at least that was my opinion. When blind Abraham came and wept for us, and he did almost every day I was generally inclined to yield in spite of Dr. Diamond's scepticism. Abraham was a quite stately man, more broad than tall, with a handsome face and a beard that despite his age was only slightly grey. At his temples there were pretty grey curls. His eyes looked as if a light grey film had glided down

over them. He wept without tears and his features retained even while weeping a peculiar doltish smile. His shirt was always clean and white but he never wore a collar and he always wore soft morning shoes. Dr. Diamond did not love him, but after all the poor fellow was blind and when he came and wept and swore that a blind man couldn't live on 50 or a 100 rubles a month, then it was all too true and ended by his being given an additional sum. But two or three days later he was back again with piteous wails: he had to pay for the least help he got! Dr. Diamond and I came to the conclusion that it was best we send him home to Galicia.

We arranged a passport for him too, but a blind man can not travel alone from Simbirsk to Limanova. Abraham had no relations or friends. They had gone back home, he said, and it was useless to ask why they had not taken him along. We had to find a guide for Abraham but we could not take any civilian prisoner at random. It had to be a Jew. But the Jews who were going home were not interested in Abraham: "We have trouble enough ourselves, we have children, I have an old father, I have a sick mother, I am sick myself," etc., etc. One after another went away and Abraham came constantly to us and wept: "I won't be a burden, I ask so little. Only some one to get me boiling water for my tea and help me when I have to get off the train. But they want money, that's what they want, they won't do it for nothing for they think I'm rich and I have,

God help me, not a red cent, not the smallest little coin—the greedy vultures! . . .”

“Maybe he keeps it in bills!” said Dr. Diamond to me in an aside, but nevertheless he swore at the thought of the godless rabble who would not help a blind old man of the tribe of Judah to get to the same Galicia that they were going to.

One day Abraham came to us accompanied by a young Jew we had not seen before. He was willing to see Abraham home if he could get 200 rubles and a passport. He had a squint in one eye but that was hardly ground for exemption and on the other hand he insisted that he was only seventeen years of age which we could believe in a pinch: Jews are so mature. Worse was it that he couldn't prove he was an Austrian, but this we overlooked to get Abraham on his way. When Abraham trusted him, far was it from us to doubt his honesty. He was given 50 rubles in advance. Several days later the passport was ready and with great relief Dr. Diamond paid him 150 rubles more and for once again Abraham got a little sum of money for travelling and our blessings on the journey and Dr. Diamond sighed as they went and said to me: “If only I dared believe he wouldn't come again.”

Dr. Diamond's evil forebodings unfortunately came true. Three days later old blind Abraham came to us and wept and told of his troubles. His guide had left him and had not come back. He had taken the two hundred rubles with him and also ten

rubles belonging to Abraham. Dr. Diamond raised such a scene that the neighbours, wakened from their noon-day sleep, came to their windows and Abraham wept still higher and I went and had dinner at the "Passage" . . .

The same night, it must have been about two o'clock, some one knocked loudly at the street door of the house where I lived on the second floor. It was a two story wooden house on the outskirts of the town. I sprang out of bed, put my head out of the window and saw a half score heavily armed men below. When they caught sight of me, I was covered by their weapons and received a sharp injunction to shut the window and come down in a hurry. Shortly after, I stood on the steps outside of the street door in pyjamas and slippers, surrounded by thirteen Red Guards armed with rifles. Only two or three of them were in uniform. Their leader carried a hand grenade in his belt and a cocked revolver in his hand. However he was neither coarse nor unpolite and consequently I got the greater courage to appeal to all international law and the inviolable rights of diplomacy, at the same time inviting him up to see my papers. But all this did not affect him in the least, he had papers himself and by the flare of a match he showed me a small type-written strip of paper that bore a curt order to arrest a person of my name. Therefore I got into my clothes and we set out through the dark, sleeping town where, by the way, all traffic was forbidden between nine in the

evening and six the next morning, down to the former residence of the governor where I well knew that an extraordinary commission (for combatting the counter revolution) was sitting.

I was brought into a room that was crowded with other arrested persons and with soldiers who slept and with soldiers who leaned their heads on their rifle barrels and nodded from sleepiness. The first person I saw was my secretary who had apparently been arrested at his place of lodging. He was attired in shirt, trousers, overcoat and morning shoes only and was deathly pale and frightfully unshaven. But perhaps I wasn't any too pretty myself. When he saw me he gave me an expiring look but no sound came from his lips.

I was immediately brought into the room of the head commissar. It was less swinish than is usual in a commissariat and there was still massive evidence of former magnificence. It had apparently been the private office of the governor. Two men were left sitting by me with fixed bayonets but I confess that I sank into one armchair with my feet on another and fell asleep, for as long as I was in Russia I was always a sound sleeper. It was already growing light when I was wakened and presented for the commissar, a young Jew with a highly sympathetic personality, and for his adjutant who quite the opposite was a highly sinister person, no doubt a Pole, who looked as if he might very well be his own executioner also.

The commissar with a polite gesture bade me sit down on the opposite side of the writing table. Dr. Diamond was fetched so that he could act as interpreter if necessary, but he certainly did not look as if he could be of much service, poor man. However the inquiry was conducted in German and he had therefore only to answer when he himself was questioned. This he did with a meekness and a mien that alone ought to have proved our innocence.

For that of which we were accused was not trifling. The complaint was that here from the Danish consulate passes had been issued to counter revolutionary persons and among them to officers of the Tsaristic régime. I denied absolutely that there was a shred of truth in the complaint and Dr. Diamond looked as if he wanted to speak but there was something that paralysed his tongue.

The commissar in the meantime was turning over his documents and handed me a sheet of paper that I took, conscious of his sharp staring gaze at the bottom of which played an unpleasant smile. "Have you seen that before?" he asked. "It was found on a former staff captain who was using it to flee to the Ukraine." I looked at it. It was a passport, made out to David Silberman, Austrian subject from Limanova in Galicia, signed by me and provided with the seal of the Danish consulate, and countersigned and stamped by the commissariat for war and civilian prisoners. The age and the year of birth had been erased and changed so that the age of the



bearer read 37. . . . It was the passport that we had issued to blind Abraham's squint-eyed guide.

The explanation I gave the commissar, whose smile grew broader and broader, I will not dwell on—and Dr. Diamond had also regained a little of his powers of speech and could substantiate what I said—but now blind Abraham was fetched from the town. The commissar offered tea and cigarettes while we waited and we had an interesting conversation about world politics. When Abraham had been brought in between two soldiers and was confronted with the facts, he broke down and confessed with prodigious weeping that he had arranged with the squint-eyed one to swindle the consulate out of two hundred rubles, travelling expenses and a passport. The passport the guide had sold for 100 rubles of which Abraham had received 50. When the commissar volunteered the information that in reality the passport had brought 500 rubles, Abraham's grief took on greater proportions and he gave willingly all possible information that might lead to the apprehension of the scoundrel.

When Abraham was searched, they found on him, sewed into various parts of his clothing, 3300 rubles, mostly in old-time 500 ruble notes. Also two diamonds and a ruby. Abraham wept when it was all taken from him.

Dr. Diamond and I went home in the bright morning light in a droshky. The commissariat paid. It looked as if it was going to be a lovely warm day.



The air was full of balmy breezes. Dr. Diamond shivered a little in his shirt under his overcoat.

"Do you know what I am thinking of?" he asked.

"No," I said although I guessed it.

"He had money anyway, the *old Spitzbub!* *Glauben Sie mir, sehr verehrter Herr Konsul, ein alter Advocat irrt sich selten in solchen Sachen, wenn es auch ein blinder Jude ist.*"

But old blind Abraham never came and wept for us again. Several days afterward I learned by chance that he and the squint-eyed one, who thus came to guide him after all, had been shot that same morning about five o'clock.

## *Cederblom*

OF all the many Swedes I have met in Russia, in adversity and pleasure, Karl Johan Cederblom plays the most minor rôle in my emotional life. I have only seen him once. That was at the Nikolaj railway station where we had gone to bid a friend farewell who was going into the interior of Russia as an embassy delegate. When we reached the station he had already secured a travelling companion. This was Cederblom, a stiff, slightly fat, blond gentleman, clad in a self-designed khaki uniform and polished tan riding puttees. He too was going into Russia as a delegate to some government, I didn't pay close attention as to which government, because at that time I wasn't nearly so orientated in Russian geography as I have since become. I sauntered up and down the platform with my friend and Cederblom. They had made sure of good seats in a coach that was reserved for official travellers. Cederblom was in high spirits and talked enthusiastically of the trip and his joy over all the new and unknown that he was going out to see, and I heartily envied the two adventurers who were setting out into the great Russia where I too had dreamt of losing myself.

But my turn came. I was already rich in travel and experience when, in the spring of 1918, I received

orders to go from Moscow to Simbirsk, where I was to take over the work of caring for the Austro-Hungarian war and civilian prisoners. No Danish embassy delegate had been in Simbirsk, but lately a tremendous number of letters and accounts of hardships had come from there. The prisoners of war who had gone over to the Red Guard or the Third Internationale were with great energy making life a hell for the officers and men who had not yet done so. It was intended that before my departure I should have the opportunity of studying all the documents relating to the government of Simbirsk, but they couldn't lay their hands on them at the Main Consulate, and I was suddenly ordered to leave on six hours' notice a week before I expected to leave. I was to get the ticket at the railway station from a man I didn't know, five minutes before the train left. And the official papers from the Central Soviet,—well, they would be sent to me! It so happened however, that when I went to Tula a few months before, I had gotten an obliging commissariat adjutant to fill out my delegation pass with not only Tula, but with half a score other governments as well. Among these was by a lucky presentiment also Simbirsk. But of course I said nothing about that. Besides there wasn't much time left to protest, and I wanted to go, and I did. About Simbirsk I knew nothing except that rumour didn't make it too pleasant. However, I was at liberty to find the Danish bureau for civilian prisoners, the chief of which was Dr. Joseph Diamond, who was

no doubt an excellent man, and one who knew what he was talking about, and who would certainly be able to tell me whatever I wanted to know. They were well acquainted with his address at the consulate but had mislaid it for the moment.

I had a pleasant journey from Moscow to Nishnij Novgorod. In Nishnij we ran into a dry snow storm although it was the middle of April. Nishnij lies grandly on three banks where the Olga and the Volga join. From the white Kremlin on the right bank, which is the Volga's left, I saw through the storm the joining of the two rivers, opened by spring, a heavy grey and blue view. Only in Russia can you be a hundred miles from the coast and yet see the sea. During the journey down the river to Kazan we had fine weather. We sailed past long lonely islands and large white cloisters with domes in blue and green colours; they appeared before the steamer at a sudden bend in the river, glided by as sights from a more beautiful reality, and disappeared as if they had never been.

During the whole journey I kept the name "Diamond" firmly in my mind. It seemed to me to be the only fixed point in my future existence. From Nishnij I sent a telegram haphazard to the "Danish Relief Bureau, Simbirsk," to reserve a room for me. When I came to Kazan, I went by train to Alatyry to visit some prison camps and from there I drove to Simbirsk by horse and wagon. I reached the town late one afternoon, and I saw some prisoners of war

who knew nothing either of Dr. Diamond or of a Danish Relief Bureau. After driving around a long time I saw a man whom I without thinking put down as a Jew. Luckily he happened also to be a Galician civilian prisoner, and could give us information.

We had to go all the way back, for Dr. Diamond lived on the outskirts of the town in a cozy green street that had almost a village air. My driver stopped without being told before a little worm-eaten wooden house, apparently a sort of furnished room house. *Nomera Gottlieba* in Russian letters was over the entrance. I tugged at the bell but no sound came. Then I went in and in the kitchen I came upon a big, obese female who crossly informed me that Dr. Diamond was not home and had not been home in the last two or three days more than five minutes at a time. I asked if I could wait for him and was shown into a boudoir-like room. On the door hung a cardboard placard and on it in four different languages; Russian, Polish, German, and Hungarian: *Dr. Joseph Diamond, Advokat, Attorney at Law & Authorized Representative of the Royal Danish General Consulate. Office Hours 10-12 Except Saturday and Sunday.* And in Russian below written in pencil "It's no use coming here. All the money has been given out!" The room was wretchedly furnished: a small iron bed, a table, a chair and a bureau. Over the bureau a cracked mirror, in a corner some clothes, a satchel and a pair of rubbers, on the table some Polish and Hebrew books and a

whole pile of receipt blanks. Beyond any possible doubt it was the Royal Danish Relief Bureau! I carried in my baggage and went out to settle with the thin-bearded Tartar who had driven me the last 60 versts. We had just succeeded in disagreeing thoroughly as to whether he was to be satisfied with the sum that we had decided upon beforehand, when a wagon came dashing towards us in full gallop. Standing up in it was a little stout gentleman with bare, bald head and rolling eyes, who swung his arms excitedly. When the wagon stopped, he drew near with a deep bow and an expression of the most kindly deference in his protruding eyes. He was shabbily dressed but wore a collar and otherwise looked like a European. He straightway put a soft hand on my arm as if he respectfully wanted to steal a march on me, and with furious haste began: "Diamond—Dr. Diamond at the Consul's service . . . Very honoured . . . great pleasure! . . ." and it was the truth too, I could see that. Words flowed from him, they couldn't come out quickly enough, and when in the middle of the flood of his speech he thought of something better and more pretentious, as he did constantly, then a veritable explosion took place in his mouth and the air was damp for yards around. I remember this only from his outpouring of welcome: that for the last two days and nights he had spent most of his time at the railway station, for he had positively expected me by train, but then no one knew how they ran any more . . . he had run up a

small fortune in droshky bills for the stupid asses didn't know what to charge, but that didn't make the least bit of difference for he often took money out of his own pocket for all kinds of expenses . . . but fortunately a good friend had told him that I was coming by wagon, which by the way he had already thought for a moment, and now he was here and entirely at my service for whatever I might command! The room was reserved—at the "Passage," the best hotel in town but of course I could not expect the comfort that was due me. But now he would give himself freely up to the joy of seeing me and I must realize what it meant to him. Both the responsibility that now was lifted from his shoulders and the security that my coming represented, for it had gone so far as threats against his life. But above all he welcomed the personal contact; the opportunity of talking again to a European and a cultured person. He was a lawyer himself and a *Dr. Jur* . . . but *um Gottes Himmels Willen*, he forgot himself, I was sure to be tired and hungry and he himself had hardly tasted food the last few days, for Russian buffets are so—is it not so? One is after all a cultured person! . . .

Here I took the opportunity to get in, not a word but a gesture towards my Tartar whose foxy phiz under the little black skull cap had stiffened in a hopeful smile. The Doctor grasped my meaning as one does a stick, and like a flash, took charge of the situation. It was absolutely overwhelming to see the

quickness with which the affable little man changed from respectful glances and an air which might almost be described as refined to the most extreme excitement and uncontrollable anger during which he stamped his foot and abused the unsuspecting Tartar with the intensity of a small volcano, and a bubbling technique in his choice of words. He bade him take God and the prophets, not excluding his own, to witness what a rascal and vile profiteer and son of a bad word he was! Or did he in his utter lazy ignorance think for a moment that he was dealing with speculators, hoarders, Kulaks or low usuring Jews? Or perhaps he would grasp without forcible urging that it was with *Kultur* people, first, in all modesty, Diamond, Dr. Diamond, imperial, *imperatorskij* Austrian *advokat*,—although what did a beast of a Tartar know about law,—better say *Doctor* Diamond, that is to say *vratch* or physician, one of humanity's silent benefactors who in vain do their deeds of mercy, if you can understand that, you infamous shopthief, bread profiteer, hooligan, Kalmuck swine! And this honourable gentleman for whom you have had the honour of driving and whom you would rob!—Bah, I spit! He is a high official, a consul, an *Amerikaner*, who by raising his finger can have you arrested and put in prison for an indefinite period, if you are so lucky as to evade the firing squad as reward for your unbelievable brazenness and shameless behaviour to an inviolable diplomat. . . .

And with this Dr. Diamond took some bills out of



the wallet he had held in readiness, paid both drivers and slammed the door in the face of the Tartar, who too late went into his fit of frenzy and yelled and clamoured in front of the house before he drove away, swearing, and lashing his horses.

Dr. Diamond proved himself a solicitous host. He had laid in provisions so as to regale me handsomely: eggs, cold beef, sausage, caviar of red salmon, honey and a small piece of cheese. The landlady set up a samovar and Diamond wrapped the eggs in a cloth and adroitly cooked them in the samovar. Eating utensils were scarce but there I could help him out.

Diamond at once proudly set two bottles of vodka on the table and with a waggish smile showed me a bottle of cognac he had hidden in the bed. I had no idea what it had cost but I knew that it was expensive stuff. Dr. Diamond produced a large glass for me and a quite small one for himself and poured. It gave me a queer feeling and I reflected that all that glitters is not gold and that I had 150,000 rubles on me; it still had some value at that time. But when I protested, Diamond looked both in surprise and entreaty at me and said that I really ought to drink, the glass had been M. Cederblom's who had been here a number of months the year before, a matchless chap who had lit up Dr. Diamond's existence the whole time he had been here. They had had many cozy evenings together, and in larger gatherings too of course, and with ladies, and Cederblom had sung, oh,

so wonderfully—in Scandinavian, and it would be such a remembrance if I now would drink from Consul Cederblom's glass. And of course I drank and touched my glass to that of Dr. Diamond who raised his glass and toasted me as elegantly as any Swede.

After Dr. Diamond had cleared off the table I lit a pipe and sat on the bed and dozed. Dr. Diamond chattered away and told me the story of his life, his childhood in Stanislau, student days in Vienna, about his *hochselige* Father and his good mother who believed that the angels in Paradise speak Yiddish, about his brother who died so young and the lovely children he left, a niece and a nephew, so indescribably beautiful, especially the boy, who by the way was almost perversely super-talented. And Dr. Diamond told me examples of the boy's brightness. And of Cederblom he spoke, merrily and with impropriety, while we sipped at a cognac toddy in which the strong stuff had not been spared. Diamond could not find words enough to praise Cederblom's charm and lovable personality and still he managed to convey his impression of me in such a manner that I could well feel myself flattered by the comparison. But nevertheless I thought with a certain anxiety of Cederblom's social talents, particularly his singing voice; I would never be able to enjoy the popularity in Simbirsk that Cederblom evidently had known how to procure. And I also became more and more tired and I was not free from feeling the hundred and fifty versts that I had ridden the last few days in a

Russian *Tjelega*; even if there *had* been a whole load of hay in the wagon, and bells on the lead horse, besides, the last day! I therefore wanted to go back to a hotel but when Dr. Diamond declared that no droshkys were to be had on the outskirts of the town and that he would urgently ask me not to risk my life by going out at night on foot, in which case he would have to guide me anyway as I did not know the town, I found no powers of resistance, but agreed to spend the night with him. I was to sleep in Dr. Diamond's bed and he would fix up a place for himself on the floor.

I removed my collar and boots and lay down on the bed with my fur coat over me. The bed clothes and my travelling rug I left for Dr. Diamond. I only remember seeing him in a woollen undershirt with a small, dirty shirt bosom jutting out from under his chin. . . .

I suppose that I slept especially soundly that night as I usually do, so I must conclude that it really was a great uproar that made me tumble out of bed and ask what the matter was. Dr. Diamond was already up and had struck a light. He stood by the wall and listened; his bare legs visible beneath a flowered nightshirt. From the next room we could hear excited voices and noise of furniture being moved about as if those who were quarrelling were also using them against one another. . . . "It is Tatjana Mikailovna who has come home!" I succeeded in getting out of Dr. Diamond who was intently following the tide of

battle.—“Who did you say?”—“A young lady who has the room next door. She is a dentistry student.” “Does she draw teeth for some one in the middle of the night?”—The uproar had in the meantime died down a little and only a low bickering could be heard from the other side of the wall. Dr. Diamond came over and sat down on the edge of the bed and said to me in a whisper while he constantly kept an ear cocked at the wall. “You don’t know Tatjana Mikailovna, Mr. Consul, but you will think that she is an unusually pretty girl—and intelligent. She is a little wild, that is, passionate, you understand. But what about morals taken altogether here in Russia? You know, Mr. Consul, you are a young man who have been around a bit, I can’t tell you anything new and yet I assure you it is worse than you think. In the schools even . . . conditions so unbelievable. . . . I won’t even mention the married women who are utterly without shame. Tatjana is seventeen. Just at present she has an intrigue with an Austrian cadet. He wants to marry her; can you imagine his parents’ faces, old Magyar nobility? But she no doubt has become tired of him. The one with her to-night is a German civilian prisoner, Behren, who has cast in his lot with the Bolsheviki. He is the commander of the Karl Marx Battalion and has great influence. . . .”

Here my patience burst. I restrained a strong desire to swear and in a sharp tone ordered the light out and Dr. Diamond to bed. But it was impossible

for me to fall asleep again, although I counted to a hundred both forwards and backwards. First I had been bitten so forcibly about the wrists that they itched as if they were on fire. Also I had become wakeful and let myself be influenced by the least noise, and it was very still of course and I tossed and was now too warm and now too cold, and thought not without bitter irony of how meaningless and casual it was that I lay here side by side with Dr. Diamond and what that baggage of a Tatjana looked like anyway.

An hour or three passed before I fell asleep again but then I slept right through undisturbed. The sun shone through the windows when I woke. Dr. Diamond was fully dressed and had put the room in the most beautiful order. At the side of my bed was a wooden stand on which there was a bowl of warm water and a piece of soap. Dr. Diamond now sat at the table, and now walked melancholy and very cautiously up and down the room. When I showed signs of being awake, he livened up immensely, wished me good morning, inquired as to my health and deplored deeply and at length the night's disturbances and said that as usual he had been up since 7 o'clock. It was then half past eleven.

I went out and borrowed the kitchen so as to take a wash in my rubber bathtub. When I was coming back through the small, half dark corridor I opened the wrong door and before I knew what I was doing, stood in a room that at first sight I might easily have

taken for Dr. Diamond's, for it was of the same size and furnished in the same way. Luckily there was no one in it for I was rather lightly clad after my bath. The bureau was littered with perfume bottles, empty and half-filled, and there were plenty of traces of face powder everywhere. A pair of black silk stockings with holes in the toe were coiled on the bed. And as I was about to go, I noticed, on the wall between the Tsar and Lenin, a handsomely framed photograph of a man whom I thought I knew. He was clad in a khaki uniform and shiny puttees, and across the picture written in a firm hand was a dedication from Karl Johan Cederblom, Royal Delegate.

## *Dr. Diamond*

WHILE we were at breakfast in the Passage Hotel I said to Dr. Diamond that it would be necessary to find rooms for the consulate as soon as possible and that I would be glad if he would exert himself to make the arrangements needful. It was Dr. Diamond's least trick to carry out this wish. As early as the next day I was able to move into the house of a rich Jewish dry goods merchant, Tschardegskij who during the flight eastward from Kiev had stopped in Simbirsk temporarily and had there bought a house and lived on his money and occasional business deals. Dr. Diamond was a friend of the family, and they gladly accepted diplomatic billeting. It was always an extra protection in unquiet times. Under my supervision a large Danish flag was made out of two Russian ones of the old régime. Day and night our "Dannebrog" waved over the street door and was the cause of warranted sensation. It was a beautiful flag, not quite accurate perhaps in regard to regulation dimensions but with an immense diplomatic split. The Lord only knows where it is now.

At first after my arrival in the town my time was taken up in making visits to the various commissariats. Dr. Diamond and I drove from one Herod to another and while I presented myself, and in poor

Russian gave my view of the state of affairs, he stood with pent-up impatience at my side and looked with concern at the bullet holes in the ceiling plaster or out of a window by way of diversion. But no sooner did I get stuck than he was there in an instant, had grasped the gist of the conversation and explained both what I had said and that which I had not succeeded in saying and that which I had never thought of saying, much better than I could have done myself.

If I had for a minute been inclined to think that perhaps it was best to limit official co-operation with Dr. Diamond as much as possible, the ungrateful thought at any rate choked itself at birth. To begin with, this idea never even occurred to Dr. Diamond, and secondly there was no sense at all in letting an aesthetic prejudice stand in the way of the utilization of Dr. Diamond's unmistakable ability and energy. And a more helpful and disinterested secretary than Dr. Diamond I would be hard put to find. I knew well that philanthropy alone was not the motive power. But I also knew that the sole object of his willingness to serve was to please me personally and it is also very possible that he had his own ax to grind, but at any rate I never discovered it. He was naturally self-sacrificing and quite tender in his relation to me, whom he regarded with the feeling of both a father and a servant. How often have I not been almost ashamed of myself that I could not return his affection as it deserved.

Dr. Diamond's own demands on the material good-



ness of life were ridiculously small, but for his friends nothing was too good and their worst digressions were forgivable. In relation to financial matters he possessed a sober rational outlook on life excluding that kind of disastrous hazard in regard to the treasury which is connected with a more romantic, Christian view of money. His authority among the civilian prisoners was about that of a Rabbi and in all disputes he took the part of judge. And the Christian prisoners had, in spite of all, more faith in him than they had in each other. The officers among the prisoners did not favour him but he treated them with a deferential and inexpensive politeness that disarmed them, and besides he arranged loans for them gratis among the various Jewish civilian prisoners who had made money and wanted to have their earnings converted into Austrian valuation in a profitable manner. In short how much better wasn't he than the more ornamental lieutenants I often saw as secretaries for my colleagues. They had nothing but girls on their minds and stood with their heels together and hopes of promotion in their hearts every time an old much-bemedalled fashion-plate trooped up and naïvely thought it was all for his sake. Toward the private soldier they were overbearing and promised him sulphur and hell fire as soon as they got home from war captivity as if they were living in the undisturbed bureaucracy of old Austria and not in Red Russia. Dr. Diamond knew how to stick his finger in the ground and smell his way. He was

humble when it cost nothing and rough to the borders of the poetical when there was no danger. He went to the authorities and waited, was turned away and still came back and waited until he got in. He wrote and I signed. He ran and I rode. He shrieked himself hoarse at the railing and I showed myself in the room with a silent gloomy expression. During the whole time he was with me we worked together in the best of harmony and understanding.

His only moral fault was that he did not have the natural ability to differentiate between truth and untruth. It wasn't seldom that I caught him in the very act of inexcusable slips of memory. But even then his childlike and open self-confidence was so strong that it was more often I who became embarrassed. I remember that once when he had gone out I noticed on his table a letter that had been given to him to dispatch days before. It was a delicate matter concerning a camp commander who privately was selling the flour that he received for the maintenance of the prisoners. As we had constantly received no answer I had requested Dr. Diamond to make a move in the case. But there lay the letter! When Dr. Diamond came in and unsuspectingly had seated himself at the writing table, I took a chair across from him and in a casual tone inquired whatever could be the matter with the commissariat that they did not reply to such a serious epistle. Dr. Diamond raised his eyes to Heaven and wondered long and fluently at the Russian lack of politeness, thrift,

honesty, punctuality, etc., at their laziness, ignorance, impudence, and so on and so on. He had by the way even remonstrated with the commissar in regard to the unseemly, shocking and wholly scandalous aspect of the matter. . . . Just then he caught sight of the letter which I had placed quite conspicuously on the table and grew pale but did not give in. With splendid self-control he kept up a flood of talk for yet a while, while he deftly pushed a sheet of white paper over the evidence. "If you wish, Mr. Consul, I'll go to the commissar again to-day!" I took the sheet of white paper as if lost in thought and folded it eight times each way while I reflected what an impossible situation it would be if I took the letter, not to speak of irreparably destroying the existing relation of mutual confidence. I therefore said that perhaps after all it would be best to wait; one never knew whether the commandant concerned would take it into his head to revenge himself, and who knew whether or not the commissar was personally interested in the matter . . . and Dr. Diamond upon whose forehead great beads of sweat had sprung out, nodded as eagerly as if it was his own most innermost thought I uttered, and constantly kept his gaze away from the uncovered letter. No, I would rather go up to the commissar myself one of these days. If Dr. Diamond would privately secure a pound of tobacco for me that I could take along as a sort of little chance mark of attention that would be the best way. And then I, quite nervous myself from repugnance, got up and

went without taking the letter. But Dr. Diamond who was no fool, vowed afterward and even behind my back that I was not only an exceptional man and a fine man but also an unusually wise man, a joy to my father and a true ornament for the nation that had bred me.

Dr. Diamond had remained out in Nomera Gottlieba for personal and practical reasons. He liked the place and the surroundings and the people. The food was "koscher" and he played "Preference" with his host Gottlieb. Besides, the rent was cheap, a fact which helped the Relief treasury as it defrayed house rent under the head of office expenses. Dr. Diamond constantly received a tremendous number of civilian prisoners who came to him for all possible purposes and although he often complained that he had no peace by night or by day, yet he was, after all, also proud of being sought after by so many people. The money for aid to the civilian prisoners he still paid out at the old office because friend Tschardeskij was loth to have on his stairs such a frightful invasion by his kindred race.

One evening about eight o'clock as I sat at home and drank tea the war prisoner who acted as servant came in and said there was a Jew outside the house who absolutely would speak with me and despite the late hour vehemently insisted on seeing me. I went out to him and recognized the little Jew of whom I had asked my way the evening I came to Simbirsk. His first name was Majer and he was never known

otherwise. As soon as he saw me he burst out as if he were parting with his soul: "*Herr Konsulat. Der Dr. Diamond liegt ermordet zu Hause!*" I wasted no time in words but dragged the little Jew along down the street. So Dr. Diamond's constant and sedulously expressed forebodings had come true! Majer leaped rather than walked a few inches behind me and supplemented breathlessly his first laconic communication. Well, thank the Lord, Diamond had not been murdered. It had only been very close to it. But the money that he had had for distribution had been stolen. Majer had come—so he related—about half past seven to get the thirty rubles that he was entitled to monthly but which he had not received because of the intervening events. He had no doubt but that I would pay him, however. There was no one at home at Gottlieb's, and neither did he get any answer when he knocked at Dr. Diamond's door. He was about to turn away discouraged when he thought he heard groaning from within the room. He knocked again and shouted: "This is Majer! Are you at home, Dr. Diamond?"—"Ach, help help!" he now heard in Dr. Diamond's voice, "have the robbers gone?"—"Robbers?" cried Majer, "Have you been attacked, dear Doctor? Are you alive?"—"Yes, I'm alive," wailed Dr. Diamond, "but half dead and tied up. The door is locked. Hurry! Get the police and the Consul!"

Meanwhile we had reached Dr. Diamond's lodging. A knot of people stood in front of the house

and I had great difficulty in making a way through the little corridor and into the room which was filled with militia, people in uniform and people in civilian clothes, rifle-men and young detectives in black blouses, mere boys with big automatic pistols at their belts. On the bed sat the chief of police, my good acquaintance Vladimir Stefanovitch Kruvaschin, a huge indolent Russian of such unusual dimensions that he, even while sitting, towered over his right hand man, the little, cruel and loathsome Caucasian, Grigorij Nikolajevitch, who was conducting the proceedings. Opposite these two men stood Dr. Diamond, freed from his bonds and apparently unharmed although seen in the lamp light he was yellowish pale and trembling. I greeted him and Vladimir Stefanovitch, who invited me to sit on the bed with him and at once struck me for cigarettes. The little Caucasian imperturbably continued the hearing. He had planted himself before Dr. Diamond and his gruesome, stabbing eyes bored into the other's wavering ones. Each of his questions was accompanied by a slash of his riding whip against his boots, a sound which just as regularly caused the frayed nerves of Dr. Diamond to react so that he shuddered and showed the whites of his eyes. Poor man, when one knew him as I did it was all too easy to imagine what he had already gone through, and now, in addition to that, he was being treated not as a victim of an audacious crime but rather as a suspected criminal being cross-examined.

A record was being made of what the robbers had taken from Dr. Diamond. There had been two men, both masked. The room showed visible signs of how brutally they had set about the robbery. All of Dr. Diamond's possessions lay where they had been thrown in the middle of the floor, which was littered with pieces of clothing, books and hundreds of receipt blanks. Diamond's handsome, tan briefcase—a lonely reminder of the wealthy Lemberg lawyer—had been slashed open on both sides with a sharp knife. Diamond shuddered with horror and rage as he demonstrated how they had flayed out the contents.

The booty of the bandits was several thousand rubles of the consulate's money, about 15000 rubles which Dr. Diamond had had in safe-keeping for his fellow-countrymen, a trifling sum of his own and four dainty caracal skins (Persian) of the very finest quality that he had bought during the first year of his exile for twelve rubles each but which were now at least worth their 225 rubles apiece and not even at that price would he have sold them had it been offered him.

The swarthy Caucasian sneered and curtly interrupted Dr. Diamond in his flood of words: "Enough! Answer what I'm asking you! What did the robbers look like?"—Dr. Diamond: "I told you they were masked!"—"That's no answer. Don't you remember any special marks of recognition?"—Dr. Diamond did not remember any.—"Were they tall or



short, what language did they speak and what kind of clothes did they wear?"—"One was tall and the other was short," opinioned Dr. Diamond, "and they spoke only in gestures and wore brown military capes as every one else in Russia does now."—"And their eyes?" asked the Caucasian. "What did they look like?"—"As murderers' eyes, I suppose," said Dr. Diamond with a faint sputtering.—"What kind of weapons did they carry?"—"Revolvers," answered Dr. Diamond and added with marked distaste, "and knives." He measured with his hands a length that at any rate was not too small.—"What kind of revolvers?"—Dr. Diamond shook his head angrily.—"I mean what system, what type?"—But here Dr. Diamond lost his patience. If his life had been at stake he would have had to speak. "Are you completely crazy, man! Do you suppose that people notice the calibre of a revolver when one is stuck up under their nose? And with absolute murderous intent? Are you trying to make a fool of me or are you as stupid as a musjik?"

I wondered at Dr. Diamond's courage for of course to get rough with the police was not the right method of procedure. They are no wiser in Russia than elsewhere and they are quick to utilize the natural advantages that their position offers. Dr. Diamond must have been very upset to forget this and in such a careless manner to let himself get away from the cautiousness and self-control, that he always impressed on me. The Caucasian, apparently well sat-



ified, dictated to the man taking down the record that Dr. Diamond had refused to answer the questions of the police, that he had entangled himself in self-contradictions and had given other suspicious signs of an uneasy conscience. Kruvaschin leaned toward me, took a cigarette from my case and said smilingly: "Thought so, Mr. Consul, the damn Jew has arranged the whole thing himself. I saw which way Grigorij Nikolajevitch was heading at once. He is a crafty fellow, we have worked together for twenty years and I assure you, he can smell a criminal a mile away." What could I do in the face of the turn that the case had suddenly taken. I assured Kruvaschin of my sincere belief in the Doctor's innocence, I protested, I threatened—without result. Vladimir Stefanovitch showed his white teeth under the black drooping moustache and said with fine and smiling insinuation: "Calm yourself, Mr. Consul, there is not the least talk of bothering you. *Tschestno slovo*: I give you my word of honour that you will not be mixed up in the case except possibly as a witness. This has been a pleasure. Will you allow me to take another cigarette?"

Two detectives had in the meanwhile gone through Dr. Diamond's pockets and searched his person. Before they started off with him I promised him full personal and official aid and bade him take it all courageously. But he had gone utterly to pieces and blamed only himself for the fate that he had met. It was a heartrending sight to see him taken away. I

was soon left alone in the ravaged room and was also about to go when little Majer popped out from somewhere and wrung his hands and said with a wail in his voice: "Ach, what misfortune, Mr. Consulate! Will they shoot the poor Doctor at once? And I who didn't get my thirty rubles! And God knows, Mr. Consulate, I can't get along without them. . . ." The floor was littered with receipts. I found one that had not been used, filled it out, had him sign it and paid him the money after which he withdrew thanking me and bowing deeply.

When I came home the people in the house had already heard of the assault but the full extent of the misfortune was now first made clear to them. Then a wailing and a weeping arose for Dr. Diamond was deeply loved there in the house both as Jew and as man, for his unswerving willingness to serve and for his personality and when even I apparently could not save him from prison and possibly worse things, what security did life then offer here on earth. The good people saw the ground open at their feet and spoke of selling house and home and continuing the flight eastward, to Siberia, to Kharbin, to Japan or preferably all the way to America. I tried to represent to them that Dr. Diamond would soon be set free, for after all he had been arrested on the most casual suspicion. But they looked deeper into things than I did. They did not doubt that it was the police themselves who had committed the robbery. In the militia all kinds of elements were to be found,

also people just released from jail and as for Vladimir Stefanovitch and Grigorij Nikolajevitch, they are worse than the worse Bolsheviki. By some miracle or other, or else perhaps just because of their arrant rascality, they had understood how to retain the leadership of the criminal police, also after the Bolsheviki had taken the helm, although no people were more filled with the spirit of reaction and Black Hundred than they. Mr. Tschardefskij had no good expectations from that quarter, quite the contrary.

My exertions to free the Doctor were unsuccessful. He was brought to the prison of the government and to get his release before his case had come up was out of the question. As always in Russia I was shown from one to the other and at last back to the first one again, but the only result was that Dr. Diamond had food brought in to him, which Tscharefskij had by the way already attained through a little arrangement with one of the jailers.

Tscharefskij's expectations did not fail of fulfillment. One day he came and told me that both he and others who were friends of Dr. Diamond had been visited by an emissary of the police who reported that Dr. Diamond's case looked very serious. Evidence of his participation in the activities of a counter-revolutionary organization had been found, and if he was turned over to the Bolshevistic counter espionage he would most certainly be shot at once. However the criminal police did not believe that he was as guilty as he appeared to be and if a sum of

money was placed at their disposal—to be accounted for later of course—they would work in the right places to save his life. If not, perhaps he would be shot already that night. 4000 rubles had been demanded of Tscharefskij and he had temporarily paid out 1000.—“What shall I do,” he said to me quite shaken, “they have the upper hand and I can’t let the Doctor be murdered; and then I thought too that possibly the consulate could reimburse me for my expenditure as the case most closely concerns it.”

Under these circumstances I said to Tscharefskij that I would contribute, if he could procure 4000 rubles from Dr. Diamond’s friends. In any case it would be cheaper to act together and at once. The money was gotten together and already the day after, I went to Vladimir Stefanovitch Kruvaschin who, broad-shouldered and mighty, received me at once in his little office where many a criminal and now and then an innocent person must have suffered bitter pangs. The Caucasian was there with him but when we had talked a little about the weather and smoked a couple of cigarettes, Kruvaschin found something for him to do so that he was obliged to leave the office which he did with all visible signs of angry and repressed ill-will. When we were alone, we lit cigarettes again and I broached the case and explained to him how the arrest of Dr. Diamond and the constant suspicion that rested on him not only affected the consulate but also the royal Danish government. I had therefore decided to offer a reward of 5000 rub-

les for the apprehension of the robbers to be divided among the detectives at the discretion of Kruvaschin. The 2500 I would pay at once and the rest would follow when Dr. Diamond was set free. Kruvaschin showed his teeth in a smile and said that the police were absolutely forbidden to accept money. During the twenty years that he had been its chief there had not yet been a single instance of any detective accepting as much as a kopeck for work it was his duty to perform. But in this instance where it was a foreign government that did the *État* the honour of wishing to reward its dangerous exertions he would deviate from his principles and accept the money—but only under receipt. Then he took the envelope I handed him and without looking at the contents wrote on a little strip of paper: “Received 2500 rubles on account—Kruvaschin.” We talked a while longer, shook hands and parted. The receipt I had rolled together in a little ball; it lay on the floor when I went. The last I saw was the face of Grigoriy Nikolajevitch, the Caucasian scowling at me from the window.

Shortly afterward Dr. Diamond was released. His stay in prison had lasted three weeks. His natural optimism had carried him through this bad time. However, there had been many cultured people to talk to in the jail. Also they had played cards and thanks to the friendly jailer had constantly received food and mail from without. But Diamond did not know how much his life had hung by a thread. It

was Tscharefskij who informed him what his friends had suffered on his account, and what it had cost them. Dr. Diamond was so moved that he wept.

"I'll repay them, Mr. Consul, and every one else and with six per cent. I'm no beggar. My legal practice the last year before the war brought me in 25,000 Austrian kroner and I own two houses in Lemberg. But I will not because of that forget what I owe the hearts and willing help of my friends." Again and again he referred to the charity that had been shown him and no one could be more effusively grateful for a trifling and matter of course evidence of friendship than Dr. Diamond for whom goodness and sacrifice was the daily salt of life.

As far as the further development of the case is concerned, there is only this to tell, that the robbers were never found but that Kruvaschin unexpectedly was arrested several weeks later and put in the government prison while Grigorij Nikolajevitch took over the leadership of the criminal police. Whether he thought that we only had done what was right from our point of view or whether he had been afraid to get into trouble with the consulate—or other reasons were present, I leave unsaid. The fact remained that we got no further unpleasantries from that quarter.

## *Hapsburg Officers*

THE 22nd Evacuation Hospital in Simbirsk is a large red building that has never been quite finished. It lies north of the town, out on the high left bank of the Volga and from its front can be seen an enchanting view of the waters and islands of the river and particularly of the high sky that is never the same.

Dr. K.— the Austrian chief physician showed me around. It was shortly after my arrival in Simbirsk and my first visit to the hospital. We went through long corridors where old, unshaven prisoners of war in dirty smocks but otherwise naked ceased sweeping to look dully after us. In the big ward where there were more than fifty beds, the air was thick with poverty and the sweat and wretchedness of many people. The sick for the most part were up and sat on the edge of the beds staring dully in front of them, or looked at those who whittled, patched clothes or repaired their frightful wrecks of boots or who ate some extra food that they themselves had bought. Some played cards with filthy rags that apparently had served through the campaign and several years of war imprisonment. There were few real invalids. They had already been exchanged. There was only an occasional one whose arm had been amputated and several who were blind or in-



sane. Otherwise they were men with internal sicknesses and injuries, cancer, heart trouble, asthma and tuberculosis. Yes, tuberculosis, they all had that, I think, they looked so white and grey. But there are so many technical names for its various stages. The sick did not pay much attention either to the physician or myself. They didn't rise, and used no polite phrases. They were indifferent and could no longer be disappointed.

In the small rooms we visited last it was at once apparent that here it was not worth while to keep up the patient's hopes by giving his sickness a name. For here sickness was Death and those who lay here knew they were to die. This look can easily be recognized on the sick if one has ever had the opportunity of observing it. Such a parsimonious expression comes into their faces because they will not any more waste their last thoughts on anything between Heaven and Earth, but lie and impress on themselves that which in this brief respite is most important to keep fixed in the memory. They lie nice and quiet in their beds, every little unnecessary exertion they must pay for with much cold sweat and coughing. How wretched they are, and thin and weak! They can barely talk, their voices leave them only as weak breaths. Even when they lie stretched out on their backs and still as mice, it is as cautiously as if the mere pressure of their own weight could squeeze out what little life there was still left in them and they therefore wished to remain hovering in the



air. Some had been long dying. Illness had slowly tapped their strength for three long years of imprisonment.

Maybe they could live a while longer, perhaps three weeks, perhaps three months, perhaps a year. But some had been overtaken with galloping speed in less than three months. They still remembered what the others had forgotten, that they had once been sturdy warriors who strode along and drew breath without thinking of their bodies. And now their emaciated remnants lay here, with those others whom they, as healthy men, had known as hopeless sick, and if it had not been for the bit of soul that still burned in the mute eyes, one could believe that these wax-like limbs and deathly pale faces already waited for the unplanned board coffins. But corpses are less uncanny. Corpses are nothing and make no appeal even to the intellect and these living unextinguished eyes with their dumb expression of black suffering and unfathomed, fixed idea filled me with horror and to me it seemed brutal that I should make my rounds here as healthy and well-dressed as any kingly supernumerary, here where the abyss of death already divided for ever he who was to live from them who knew they were to die—.

When Dr. K.— had shown me round he said: “I presume you will also pay a visit to the honourable officers. My assistant will show you the way. I can’t very well,” he added a bit embarrassed. “You see, in a hospital there can only be one chief and that

must be the physician. But that is a point of view which all officers do not find equally easy to acquire. Perhaps you will find that they have already formed an ill opinion of you because you called on me first." He smiled as he said this and we parted.

The officers occupied a very large and airy room on the second floor. There wasn't much more furniture than the beds that stood in two precise rows along the walls on the long sides of the room. In the middle of the floor was a table where chess was being played as I entered. All rose to their feet at once with the exception of several who were bedridden. An elderly officer with a markedly shrunken turkey neck and small chin whiskers took three formal paces forward to meet me. He was a colonel and the ranking officer. I also recited my titles and we again bowed stiffly to each other. The colonel presented me for the staff officers: there were two more, a Lt. colonel and a major. The major presented me for the lieutenants and the senior lieutenants for the cadets. The ceremony was a long one and in dead earnest. Those who were presented for me snapped their heels together with vigour, also those who had their bare feet in hospital slippers. The three senior officers and I seated ourselves at the table while the younger officers formed a ring around us some distance away. Only the staff officers took part in the conversation. The others stood and alternately put the right leg in front of the left and vice versa.

The three staff officers were individually good types and taken altogether were almost an allegory. First the colonel, *kaiserlich und königlich*, right to his finger tips, thin legged in his riding breeches, gentleman, and with the same expression of intelligence in his face as a playing card. He wore a faded dark-blue uniform with gold braid, apparently an old dress uniform that he was wearing out in his war imprisonment. The lieutenant-colonel on his right was a Hungarian, stout and elderly, but not unwarlike, with a petticoat-chaser's eye and with that slightly dandified arrogance over his person which is the special contribution of the Magyar to the Balkan type. And finally the Major on his left who had only to open his mouth to betray his native Vienna. He completed the trio with his spotted, slipshod tunic that sat on him like a house jacket and his round-bearded and jovial face in whose smile belief in all big words and values melted as sugar in water. The colonel took the lead haltingly and the two others supported him. The conversation dragged. I noticed that in the interrupted chess game both the white bishops, strange to say, stood on the black! When the conventional things had been said, we fell of course head first into the hospital conditions and Dr. K.—got it right and left. He encouraged Bolshevism, undermined the authority of the officers over the men, destroyed discipline and ignored him, the colonel, who was the much higher ranking officer. "I am here as a convalescent and not as a patient and

am in full possession of my faculties and he can therefore not deny me the right to exercise the authority due me as ranking officer in purely military and disciplinary affairs especially when I see how matters are going under his leadership! But he wants to set me at nought here and he isn't ashamed to play the Russians, those infamous traitors of the fatherland, against me. He threatens to discharge me as cured, a plan which approaches high treason as only by getting home as an invalid can I again place my arms and my experience at the disposal, in the field, of my Kaiser and War Lord."—The major smothered a smile and I hastened to acquaint the colonel with the fact that he was touching on a dangerous theme as I as a representative of a neutral power ought not to get the impression that the invalids in whose repatriation I was interested, possibly were less disabled than their testimonials certified.

Before I left I had a talk alone with the colonel in the little room that he occupied together with the lieutenant-colonel. The colonel uncovered from under his bed some heavily bound and sealed packages. "It is of the utmost importance," he said, "to get these documents to their address: the k. u. k. War Department in Vienna." For an instant I was slightly nonplussed. Everything seemed to indicate that I was within a hand's breath of military secrets of the Lord knows what importance and danger. The colonel continued: "As former ranking officer in the camp at D (he named one of the big Siberian camps for

officers where several thousands at a time could be interned) I have at my transfer as invalid to this hospital, from which I contrary to my expectations have not yet been sent further on and home, thought it my duty to bring with me from the camp at D various records of matters that came up. As camp commander I felt responsible for their fate and the existing anarchistic conditions in Russia make it hardly possible for me to leave these matters in the care of the Russians until after the end of the war. These are records of the various affairs of honour that naturally have come up in a camp where so many officers are lumped together under difficult conditions, for the most part court of honour decisions handed down under my chairmanship. Reports of the relations between various officers and documents relating to breaches of discipline—you will readily see of what extraordinary and deciding importance this material is for future promotions in the army and how quite especially the certainty that these matters are in their proper place will tend to strengthen the spirit in the army and the common responsibility and feeling of honour in the officers' corps. As it furthermore would be a personal satisfaction to me and in some degree I think, a service by which I will be remembered, to have contributed my part to the successful sending home of the documents, I urgently request you to stand by me in word and deed!"

I sat mutely and weighed in my thoughts the four heavy packages. Considered as luggage they were

not inviting. To get out of it I asked if they really contained nothing but that which the colonel had mentioned. But that didn't work; I was free to censor, or, what was easier, to take his word of honour as an officer. Well, then I had to promise to do my best to find a way out but I stipulated that in case I succeeded in getting a hospital train for the acknowledged invalids, that then the colonel was to take his packages along with him to Moscow where he could turn them over to the Danish General Consulate if he feared to risk getting them through the customs at the frontier—.

Some time afterward I received a telegram that I would get a hospital train for my invalids as soon as possible. Two Russian physicians also came and began to classify the prisoners of war all over again, both those in the hospital and the camp and those who worked in the town, without regard as to whether they had been acknowledged invalids two or three times beforehand. However they were not severe and the procedure was not wholly unfair, for in many places in Siberia invalid certificates had been cheap.

One afternoon I was visited by an officer from the hospital. Von S was his name and he was a first lieutenant in a dragoon regiment and a tall blond fellow with a somewhat brusk manner. He came to complain that the commission had rejected him although he had certification that he was unfit for military service because of bronchitis. He wanted me

very much to influence the commission so that he could leave any way. I insisted that if the physicians who knew their business couldn't make an invalid out of him, then I, who knew nothing about it could not possibly help him even if he had pulmonary consumption. My task was to see that those prisoners of war were sent away who had received lawful invalid certificates at the hands of the commission. But the lieutenant was balky and at last he actually became rough and said that other delegates had a different idea of their position, etc., and one word led to another until I had to ask him to step outside and convince himself that he wasn't in an Austrian barrack but in a royal Danish consulate.

Already the next morning I received a letter in which I was informed in correct phrases that *Oberleutnant* von S felt that his honour as an officer was impugned by my utterances and a negotiation with whomever I would show the honour of entrusting the care of my interest would be welcomed with pleasure. With assurance of sincere and particular esteem, von R *k. u. k.*, *Hauptman* in the *k. u. k.* Heavy Artillery Regiment Nr. 8.

When my secretary, Dr. Josef Diamond, showed up I gave him the communication which he read and reread without saying a word. He had become very pale. "*Um Gottes Himmel Willen!*" he said hoarsely, "You're not going to risk your life at the caprice of this crack-brained lieutenant! Besides he must be mad to call *you* out! Your life is precious



to us all and then to think in what a frightful situation, with what responsibility and in what sorrow you would leave me, if—which God forbid. . . .”

Dr. Diamond had talked himself into a state of emotion but as I was not yet dead, I explained to him that we could hardly fight at once since then we should probably have to take turns at shooting with my little vest pocket automatic. The duel at the very soonest could only take place at a remote date. Dr. Diamond quickly felt much reassured. I then told him that in the meanwhile something had to be done so that the laws of honour could be satisfied, if not for any other reason than because of the Danish colours which I was pledged to represent with full honour and glory, and I proposed therefore that he, as my friend and closest companion in Simbirsk, should look up this Captain von R and discuss the matter seriously with him and without showing any compliance that could be misconstrued.

Dr. Diamond excused himself but there was no firmness in his refusal. I could see that the affair stimulated his spirit of enterprise and his weakness for sensation! He was to negotiate with a von R. as a second and therefore on an equal footing. That was something new and unusual. He agreed on the condition that I would loan him a black necktie.

When Dr. Diamond had once agreed he immediately became so hasty and arrogant that I had fears he, under the impression that the danger to my life belonged to a distant and uncertain future, would



be a party to, if not propose himself, some such arrangement as horsepistols at six paces distance until the magazines were empty or one of the combatants, lay on the field of honour. Therefore I bade him go easy and told him that if the affair could not be settled with honour, I would, both as the offended and challenged party, choose the weapons, and I chose swords. "Swords!" Dr. Diamond burst out in disappointment. He had an aversion for cold steel. "Of course," I said loftily, "I only want to discipline the fellow. I'm no murderer!" Dr. Diamond's natural good nature and love of mankind at once came to life again. He praised my magnanimity and promised to turn the conversation in this direction when he met the other second.

Dr. Diamond's mission had hardly so honourable a course as he had thought it would have. When von R. guessed on what errand Dr. Diamond came to him (for Dr. Diamond came a great deal to the officers as middleman for loans in rubles which were to be paid back in kroner) he choked a fit down with the greatest difficulty and rushed so vehemently at the unfortunate Dr. Diamond that the latter had to withdraw in confusion. Afterward von R. revenged himself further by overwhelming the lieutenant colonel, who had been the cause of this unspeakable affront, with quite uncontrolled expressions so that the two gentlemen brawled. From this on they were as air for each other in the room, while a pair of their colleagues sitting on the edge of a bed but otherwise

correct, decided what the consequences of the broil must be and recorded and signed the result which finally was handed to the colonel for sanction and keeping.

All this I did not learn from Dr. Diamond who had been very reserved and close-mouthed regarding the result of his mission. It was the jovial major whose sympathy I had won who thus enlightened me and at the same time gave his merriment free rein over what had passed: "You should have seen von R. when your Dr. Diamond trooped up and presented himself as second. I had to go outside and laugh. You see, he's Polish, this von R. and he has a strong drop of the Blood himself as one can easily see and he is of course quite fanatic on that point. But then too, it *was* a wild idea of yours and you would have had another duel on your hands if I hadn't stepped in and explained that the downright heavenly conditions in your native land excused your behaviour and natural blindness in regard to that question. We Austrians have good reason to envy you, that you in that sense have been dealt with less lavishly from nature's hand than we—"

I did not attempt to contradict his ideas and for a moment he was lost in thought of the idyllic Denmark of which he had heard so many things and which he wanted so much to make his new fatherland. "*Wir sind ja so wie so kaput,*" he added with melancholy. Before we parted he offered to arrange my difference with the *Oberleutnant* von S for me, which I ac-

cepted gladly. As the affair was now commonly known, a reconciliation could no longer be brought about, and it was therefore definitely decided that we, after the close of the World War, should meet at a place, which at that time should be more closely agreed upon, to engage in a *rencontre* with swords until blood flowed. The protocol was drawn up and signed in triplicate of which the colonel received one for his collection. The major personally brought me my copy and as we sat in the garden smoking *Crown* cigars bought in Moscow and beside a bottle of port wine procured by Dr. Diamond, he made a gesture in the direction of the hospital and said in his broad Viennese while his pleasant smile caressed the wine in his glass: "It's easy enough for us to sit here now and grin at it all. But out of regard for the others and for their prestige that was the best way. With these people one shouldn't reason. It's a mere waste of words. If they ever stand in a ragged uniform and sell papers in Kärtnerstrasse then they will be no wiser and they will die in the belief that it is an episode. God grant that their duels are settled in Heaven!" And with that he set his glass to his mouth and emptied it.

The week after a hospital train came from Moscow and took my invalids back there and further on to the border. I stood at the hospital and saw the little crowd of a couple of hundred turn down *Kazan-skaja*. At the head were two wagons with the heavi-

est baggage and the very weakest of the prisoners of war who never could have endured the six or seven versts down through the town and out on the other side to the railway station. It was pitiful enough to see them on top of the loads, wasted and chalky white and constantly groping with their thin hands among the bundles and chests and the colonel's four heavy packages for a position that would ward off the remorseless jolting of the springless wagon. Then came the colonel and a group of officers and lastly the men in a tattered mass flanked by a pair of indifferent Red Guards. It was a friendly summer evening as light and mild and full of fragrance and peace as if there were nothing in the world but nature's gentle beauty to protect the happiness of human beings. But the people on this broad green Volga street were an unreal flock of ghosts and a column of worn and beaten prisoners who with bent backs dragged themselves toward home where they felt it so much easier to die. I wonder if these broken beings who with a terrible parodied effect wore the grey-blue remnants of their uniforms, still remembered how they had marched away to the sound of drums and trumpets, now that they without any other sound than their own tired and irregular footbeats were driven in a flock to the last *marche macabre* of their military life?

When the column far down the street turned from *Kazanskaja* into *Gontcharofskaja*, a half score men had already dropped back at various distances from

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the main body. They were unable to keep up and no one looked back to see what had become of them. For such is war and war's eternal law.

## *The Red Garden*

**I**T was in July, 1918. Since three o'clock in the morning I had been pacing back and forth in the railway station of Alaty, waiting for the train from Kazan. It did not come. In the waiting room it was impossible to breathe for snoring peasants and soldiers. I could have stayed in the hotel and slept, but it was in the town and the town was as usual five full versts from the station so that the train might come and go many times before I could be notified. No, there was nothing to do but wait; to doze on a travelling bag with my back against the wall or with my head in my hands; to eat soup and drink tea at the buffet when that variation offered itself, and to light one cigarette with the butt of another.

Along toward noon an armoured train arrived from the north. Now I had that to look at, anyway. It was manned by a choice selection of human scum, escaped convicts with low criminal foreheads and runaway schoolboys whose pale features bore marks of mental bewilderment and early physical decay. But otherwise it was an impressive train. First class Entente ware. In front was an armoured tower with a quick-firing cannon in a revolving turret and with slits in the sides from whose depths machine gun barrels gleamed brassily. After this came the monster locomotive, monitor-grey like the rest. It was

armoured right down to the tracks. In organic connection with it was a long corridor car for riflemen, large enough to hold the entire crew of the armoured train during combat. The rest of the train was composed of three elegant slender Pullman cars, four *tjepluskas*, or box cars, with ammunition and baggage, and last of all a flat freight car on which stood a black automobile and an aeroplane.

About four or five o'clock in the afternoon, there were signs of life in the train, and the engine began to get up steam. It was going to leave and in the direction I wanted to go. I asked a railway man if he thought there was any chance of my being able to go along. "What do you want to mix up with that Red gang for?" he said, when he saw and heard that I was a stranger. "Unless, of course, you want to go straight to hell. But now it looks as if we might be getting rid of this plague. The Czechoslovaks are on their way. There's fighting going on not a hundred versts from here. And anybody can see what the Reds are good for. They put seventeen wounded in the hospital, but what kind of wounds do you think they were? Swine, I say, tenfold damned swine! But the Commandant is standing over there, if you want to ask him anything."

The Commandant of the train was a sailor from the Baltic fleet. He stood on a step which was let down from the locomotive and he was talking with the engineer. I ventured to interrupt the conversation by handing him my card and dropping a few

words to the effect that it was hard for a diplomatic official to have to waste his valuable time at a damned tiresome railway station. The sailor seemed to understand. He was an unusually handsome fellow with a winning smile. There wasn't a trace of villainy about him. With blue eyes in a sun-burnt, dare-devil face, a fine curved nose and soft curly hair, he answered completely to the standard description of the hero in a regular boy's story. Apparently such people do exist if one only knows where to look for them. His smile hinted at dazzling teeth as he bade me take a seat in the foremost car and if the guard made any trouble to refer him to his permission. Anyway he was coming himself, right away. We were leaving in ten minutes.

I entered the foremost car. There was no guard and the door to the corridor stood open. The first compartment was a kitchen. On a table stood a samovar and an alcohol burner. On the floor lay a pile of wheat bread in round loaves, a half-emptied firkin of butter, and several large biscuit boxes with sugar. It was almost impossible to get sugar. I had only a little left in the bottom of my canteen but now I got it filled.

The next compartment was apparently for various members of the crew, but they were not there at the moment. The floor and the sofa seats were littered with playing cards, bits of bread, cast-off clothing, tin cups, cartridges and sun flower seeds. The baggage racks were crammed with rifles, belts, sabres,



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and hand grenades and with leather articles for military use, ranging from belts and map cases to boots and brand new saddles. In a compartment further along, the sleeping accommodations on one side had been broken down, and the wall from ceiling to floor covered with a General Staff map over the Volga region. To all appearances this was the Commandant's compartment. I went in, put my travelling bag, which contained several hundred thousand rubles, well up under the berth, cleared off the seat and sat down on my raincoat to await events.

On the window shelf stood a typewriter which had been stopped in the middle of an order. There was also a pile of papers, telegrams and such, but I was not a spy. On the other hand, I had no scruples about studying the map to see if it were possible to find out how far the Czecho-Slovak revolts had reached. But, unfortunately, it contained no strategic information. Then I examined two Browning revolvers and a Maxim pistol and found them loaded in all chambers. Lastly I turned to the room's collection of books, which consisted of one volume of Jules Verne's collected romances, in Russian translation, and a hideously printed pamphlet dealing with history's most notorious regicides. The cover showed a picture of the execution of Louis the Sixteenth. The red blood flowed in a thick stream down over the black letters.

Both ten and twenty minutes passed but I was still alone in the car. I was almost going to sleep. But

I decided not to when I heard a woman humming in the next compartment, the last in the row, and the only one I hadn't investigated. Soon I lit a cigarette and went out into the corridor.

The door was ajar and gave me enough of a glimpse of the compartment to disconcert me considerably. It was hung from ceiling to floor with vari-coloured silks, and these were again decorated with military portraits and other photographs belonging to the international genre: *nu artistique*. A crumpled sky-blue quilt covered the sofa, and on the floor a genuine rug had been folded several times. It looked as if the services of a powerful vacuum cleaner would do it no harm. At the window, before a dressing table and with her back to the door, sat a feminine figure clad in thin silky pyjamas that still had a pink tendency, and with her feet in a pair of downy slippers.

With deftly wielded brush and pencil she was in the act of practicing that intimate art which women the whole world over call to their aid in the hope of renewing and refining their natural charm. But what struck the eye more than anything else in this extraordinary boudoir on wheels was the really opulent collection of bottles, flasks and vials, jars, cans and jugs which were spread over the whole room wherever there was a vacant edge. Judging hastily, there was everything here from expensive Parisian essences to brutally stinking Moscow perfumes, rice powder, lip sticks, alum and cold cream, pom-

ades, rouges, formols, sublimates, and other much more mysterious antiseptic arcana.

The occupant of the compartment had ceased humming and was subjecting the result of her work to a critical inspection. Presumably she caught a glimpse of me, for she turned suddenly, and when she saw that I was engrossed in what was going on on the platform, she tip-toed to the door and shut it, though not without first having noted my foreign appearance. I caught a glimpse of her black eyes which lit a smile, and I saw that she had bobbed hair and was about seventeen.

I made myself comfortable in the Commandant's place, and soon after she came in. Now she was all powdered and dressed in a short white frock, white stockings and shoes. I rose, bowed and gave my name. She wasn't at all curious to know how I happened to be aboard a Bolshevik armoured train, but just asked me charmingly how I was. Later she proposed that we have tea. I was willing, and accompanied her to the front room to help cut bread and bring the samovar to a boil.

When we had brought everything into the compartment and cleared the shelf of typewriter and papers, the sailor finally made his appearance. He thought it was fine that I had made myself at home in the train so quickly, and in spite of my poor Russian had managed to make myself understood by Dolly Mikailovna, who was a prominent member of the crew, a sister of mercy, and, if need be, a physician. Also

she was chief economist of the household, but in case of danger and battle she was a soldier who could handle a machine gun as well as her revolver.

Several hours afterward, we rolled briskly southward. The sailor confided to me that his train was bound in the direction of Syzran. The Czechs had evacuated Pensa, but had, on the other hand, taken Samara, and perhaps other cities. Communication between Siberia and Turkestan was broken off. He couldn't tell me whether Simbirsk, where I had my delegation, had fallen, but he supposed so. The situation was not of the best.

"What can I do with that kind of people," he said and gestured toward his command who yelled and fought playfully in corridors and compartments. "We haven't any discipline in the army yet," he said. "In a way, I'm sorry that I left the navy. We lay in Reval in the old days. Dolly was a cabaret singer—a great drawing card. All the officers were crazy about her. Well, that's over now, and it's just as well. If we only could get this fighting over with. I'm not particularly fond of dragging around with this train and a collection of bums who run when they hear the first shot. And then their filth! They absolutely don't care, either about themselves or other people."

In the evening our train stopped and remained standing at a little forest station. It was getting dark. I lay down in the soft grass next to the track

and watched the half-grown soldiers fighting and tumbling each other, but without malice and less like children than feeble-minded. Dolly Mikailovna also came out to enjoy the evening breeze. She came with two young rabbits in her skirt, one milk-white with pink eyes and one black with blue eyes. She lay down beside me and let go the animals, and they began to nip the grass right away, hopping around in their queer funereal manner, with ears laid back. When the soldiers discovered them, they came running over and wanted to pick them up and pet them. But they soon got tired of that, and, drawing revolvers out of their back pockets, they aimed at the rabbits and shouted with a grin if she thought they could hit the mark. But she got angry, and promised to take a life for a life. Then they gave up the idea of killing the rabbits, and instead aimed at us and at each other, yelling and gesturing wildly, now and then relieving their feelings by firing a shot in the air.

When it got quite dark, Dolly Mikailovna ordered them to drag sticks and brushwood together on the roadbed. She carried the rabbits in, and came back with a frying pan, butter and flour. She squatted by the blaze, whose smoke in the quiet evening made our eyes smart, while the crackling flames picturesquely illuminated our little group. In her thin dress, Dolly's young luxuriance was revealed against the gleam of the fire in transparent contours. But, despite the discomfort of the smoke and the tiresome

position which forced her to gather her gown over her stockings, she bravely kept on baking water pancakes as long as anybody would eat them. After that we lay for yet awhile around the dying fire smoking cigarettes and conversing to the fragile music of a balaleika.

Late that night we moved off again, and about six in the morning we came to Sviagorod. I slept in the sailor's berth with a Russian officer's greatcoat over me. He had set up a camp cot for himself under the big map. He was, by the way, not in the compartment for part of the night.

I woke up because the train wasn't moving, but I couldn't persuade myself to get up. I tried to get enough sleep by dozing for a while. About nine o'clock I came out at the station to wash myself at the *kipjatok*, and I found most of the soldiers there splashing water on each other with playful cries. When I had had my head under the cold stream, I took warm water back to the train for shaving. My host was also tidying up. He was going to Sviagorod to pay a visit to the higher authorities.

It was nearly noon when we got started, since the automobile had to be taken off the train. That day Dolly Mikailovna appeared in the costume of a sister of mercy, which barely hid other articles of clothing. But it was certainly terribly hot. She had thrown a kerchief over her page-like hair. In the sharp sunlight, her face in spite of its youth was as fatally wasted as a moon landscape, and the chalk-

white powder couldn't cover up an occasional eruption. But she was as merry as a magpie, her laughter was deep as a cough and keen as the noise of a grindstone, and her body was a column of quicksilver and a living animal under the thin linen. When we were seated in the car, the sailor at the wheel and Dolly and I in the back seat, it wouldn't start. A blue cloud of stinking naphtha welled from the exhaust, and the motor exploded like a machine gun. Another half hour went by before the car began to move. Then we jumped on again in a hurry, to be along when it started, and, with a couple of soldiers clinging to each running board, we flew forward with every horse power unleashed.

There was nothing very remarkable about Sviagorod. It baked in the blaze of the sun with all its streets flung gapingly empty. Wooden villas stood with closed green shutters in the midst of neglected gardens. We rushed by other houses whose doors and windows were wide open so that we could see the dusty remains of furniture within. Their bitter expression of desertion left a brief sadness in the mind. We came past a white church with blue onion cupolas, and then across the market-place. It was Saturday and market-day, but there were only a few peasant wagons around. But a great many Austro-Hungarian prisoners of war loitered here, looking at the produce with eyes whose natural ravenousness had been tempered by long abstinence. They were easily recognizable, in spite of their patches and cast-



off Russian rags, by some remnant of a blue-grey uniform, usually the cap, which had survived war and imprisonment and years of vagabondage. Most of them could be told by their features which could not be mistaken for those of either Russian or Tartar.

The Soviet of Sviagorod was housed in the city Duma's building on the market-place. When our car swung up before the arcade, the guard had been called to arms, and stood ready with a machine gun. One never could tell in these times! All of them were Hungarians, by the way, picked red guards.

The President of the soviet and the Commandant of the town—he combined the two offices—was a Red Jew who had some manufactured name which I have forgotten. His age was uncertain. There were moments when he looked like quite a young man whose features had been ruined early, and others when he resembled an old man to whom some sort of disease had given a glow of false youth. His sparse newly cropped hair revealed several bare spots. His eyes were especially remarkable. They were without real expression, but at times they flamed and a reddish light seemed then to radiate from them. Altogether, he gave the impression of being a man of superior gifts, but undeniably not quite all there.

He looked startled when he saw me, and it got worse when he perused my diplomatic papers and learned my errand. His whole body shook with poorly controlled rage and gnashing his teeth like



a baited despot, he told me that he didn't recognize the bourgeois governments of Europe. As far as he was concerned, they were simply nothing but air. And as for these prisoners in whom I was interested, they no longer existed. He was no gaoler for capitalism. In free Russia, every one who wants to can be a free citizen and doesn't have to be fed on the illusion of bourgeois philanthropy.

With that, he turned his back on me and began to ogle Dolly Mikailovna. Later, however, I was restored to grace again, since he emphasized that Dolly Mikailovna's friends and guests were also his. He invited me to dinner that day, and also to attend a great Communist celebration which was to take place the following Sunday. On that occasion a magnificent public park, *Krasnij Sad*, i. e., the Red Garden, would be turned over to the grateful populace. With a satanic smile he remarked that he would consider it an honour to wrest such promising youthfulness from capitalistic diplomacy.

"You belong to us already, I can read in your eye that you are without prejudice. But you have never felt the truth within you. You haven't been filled with mighty idea of human brotherhood. But it, too, shall flower in your young blood." He regarded me with an odd look, gripped my arm, and putting his mouth to my ear, he whispered, "I will confide in you. In me is truth. I am the resurrected saviour of the new time. I am . . ." He suddenly wiped his brow and came to his senses with a

smile. "It's hot," he said, without transition, and after that he didn't utter one irrational word.

After dinner, which was without alcohol and not too rich though well prepared by a Viennese cook, I sauntered out through the town. The others drove to the barracks to arrange some details for the big military parade for next day. I understood of course that although it was to serve a festive purpose, it had a deeper meaning when one remembered that the Czecho-Slovak danger came a little nearer to Sviagorod each day. I still felt rather uncomfortable after the scene with the Jew, but that soon passed away when I begun to talk with some bearded old prisoners of war. They had never seen a delegate before, and very properly didn't expect miracles from the one they now saw. The officers were different. They always believed that now they were going to be sent home at once to glory and grandeur. I inquired about conditions and bought some packages of Mahorka tobacco for division among the prisoners.

They complained mostly about their younger comrades who had joined the Red Guard and who were now pestering the life out of them to get them to do likewise. "Of course," they hinted, "the food is good, and they give uniform, tea and sugar and three hundred rubles a month, and if they tried to send you to the front it's easy enough to beat it. A week ago a regiment came through here from Tambof. Two hundred men had deserted, and the other

three hundred were only waiting for their chance.—No, it isn't very dangerous, but, still, you never can tell—and there's the wife and children at home—and the property! It's better to stick it out for a while longer." In this good intention I encouraged them. They wouldn't say anything bad about the Russians. Most of them were crazy, of course, and careless rather than downright evil. Everything was in the most terrible disorder. Maintenance in the camp was a thing of the past, and still orders came that no one was to leave it. There wasn't a rag of clothes to get, and little to earn for those who weren't professionals. But the worst thing about the commissar rule was that they used the prisoners of war for all the work which the Russians were too lazy to do. They had to clean stables and barracks and hospitals, and lately they had been forced to do all the work connected with the new Communist park—in the blazing sunshine—getting nothing but dry bread for it. Fine freedom, wasn't it? These scoundrels could call themselves Proletarians and Bolsheviks, Communist and Internationalists or whatever they pleased, the old Russian laziness and loafing and thievery was right there just the same.

I left these prisoners both irritated and enlivened by their honest anger. With these men from Kärnten and Tyrol and Salzburg, one could talk as if they were one's own people. My old grandfather, himself a farmer, would have stood just this way and sucked his pipe and growled at the oppressors,

if it had been his fate to fall into Russian war imprisonment.

In the evening I drove back to the railway station with the sailor. Dolly Mikailovna didn't come. She spent the night in town.

Before we left the next morning, Dolly Mikailovna came back in one of the soviet cars to change her costume. She was to take part in the parade with a detachment of the crew from the armoured train. The sailor and I drove out to lunch with the soviet.

The parade was to start at three o'clock. The commissars and staff stood on the balcony of the arcade and saluted the red colours. They were all in warlike array, with many weapons, map cases and binoculars, but none outdid the red Jew who in spite of the heat wore a leaden grey, steel helmet with a red, seven-pointed star in front. He wore long, spurred patent-leather boots and also a shining sabre, which in Russia is a fantastic and foreign weapon. His right sleeve was ornamented with the well known emblem of the shock troops, a white death's head in silver over two crossed bones on a red background. The sailor at his side, in his plain blouse and with black and orange ribbons on his cap, didn't look like any great military genius.

I had chosen to place myself in the shade of the arcade, so as not to alienate the prisoners or create false impressions among the Hungarian Red Guards. Here was also the band of the Austrian prisoners which was to play for the parade and later for the

fête. They had not been requested to march with their instruments in the sun. It was tacitly understood that their art raised them above their plight, and that the success of the celebration depended largely on their music and good will.

The parade had in the meanwhile begun. It didn't tire anybody by being too long. There were two *Polker*, or regiments of about two hundred men each. The men slouched in whatever step pleased them. Many of them were prisoners of war, notably Hungarians and Prussians. A military bearing came over them whether they would or not when they again got weapons in hand, so that they couldn't possibly be mistaken for Russian Red Guards, only a few of whom had been in the war. After the infantry came a machine gun section, a score and a half men on small brown horses. A field piece with team represented the heavier calibres.

Last in line came a troop from the armoured train, with a red banner on which there was printed in gold letters, *Armoured Train: Karl Marx*. Behind the banner walked Dolly Mikailovna. She looked splendid in aviation cap and white sailor silk blouse, bright red tie, revolver-holster at her belt, khaki-coloured riding breeches, and long yellow boots laced to the knees. As she passed the arcade, she saluted with her sword and a smile.

During the review we had all stood with bared heads while the band played alternately the *Marseillaise*, and the *Honour March* of the *First Vienna Reg-*

iment. Later we all marched off with the band leading and the local Communist party, men, women and children, bringing up the rear. The road, white as powder, seemed to lead right up into the sun.

The garden, however, was not very far from the centre of the city. Before being nationalized, it had been the property of a Prince Gagarin, and it still showed feeble traces of French gardening. But great arbitrary changes had been made in it to make it more popular. The whole central part had been razed to make room for a band stand and open space. Here a statue had been raised which was to be unveiled during the celebration. It stood in the centre of one of the long sides of the place, still cloaked in its cover of coarse military linen, against a background of black cypresses and tujas. A speaker's stand draped in red stood to the right of it.

As soon as we entered the garden, the procession broke up. The soldiers stacked their rifles and laid their hand-grenades in the grass. As guests, we were shown to some chairs directly in front of the speaker's stand. At the market-place there had been only a few spectators; here a part of the civilian population seemed to have come, mostly young girls loth to let their youth wither at home. There are so few amusements in a small town; there were fewer now, and there was nothing binding after all, in coming to watch the latest invention of the Reds.

Now the band played *The Beautiful Blue Danube*. Then the Jew stepped up on the stand and laid his

helmet in front of him. He sweated large drops, but we all did that, and he was very pale. The burning sun had had no effect on his colour. He began to speak. He spoke well, but it seemed as if he weren't really interested in what he was saying himself. A rich stream of Bolshevik and general Socialist doctrines flowed from his mouth, without exertion but also without any leading idea. In the right spots he paused and let the Communists applaud. Dolly Mikailovna yawned without embarrassment. She had put her arm through mine. I heard him mention Karl Marx and Engels and thought that now the unveiling of the statue must follow. But he got past them and nothing happened. Then he presented the Red Garden to the town, and hoped that it would be made to serve the public welfare, the development of the arts, and the free expansion of love. It was a symbol of the solicitude of the Soviet Republic for the weal and woe of the proletarian masses. But it ought also to become a sanctuary for the people, a successor to the ignorant church of the *pope* or priest, yes, on this very spot there ought to be a Pantheon for the heroes of international fraternity. Here, in the course of time, would rise columns and statues to men like Plato and Babeuf, Blanqui and Delescluze, Lenin and Liebknecht. With the assistance of an Austrian sculptor, formerly a prisoner but now a free soviet citizen, he had begun the work, and caused the first memorial to be raised. He had long wavered in the choice of the historic personality to



whom the first honour should be shown. He had thought of Lucifer and of Cain. They were both wronged; they were both rebels, revolutionaries of super-magnitude. But the former was a theological figure whose supernatural character did not fit in with Marxian views. His light had been quenched in the collapse of that society whose fear and hatred he symbolized. And the latter was a mythological personage whose historic existence was very doubtful. His attention had therefore turned to a figure unmistakably of this earth, a historic man who likewise had been the victim of the religious views of predatory society. . . . And, that being the case, should any one be considered before the man who for two thousand years innocently had been chained to the pillory of a capitalist interpretation of history, the great Proletar-Prometheus, the Red forerunner of world revolution, the bourgeois redeemer Christ's twelfth apostle—*Judas Iscariot!*

The speaker had gradually worked himself into an ecstasy. The audience hardly understood what he was saying, but they felt uncomfortable under his burning gaze. Some shouted, but a number of Russians piously crossed themselves. The Jew was silent, but he did not appear anxious about the effect of his words. His features seemed rather to express a painful uncertainty. He began again, haltingly, speaking of the hour of restitution and the apostle of the oppressed, the dictatorship of the proletariat, brotherhood, the internationale . . . but he got no-



where. His face was convulsed as if under the lash of a harrowing thought. With both hands he clutched the speaker's stand, and his fingers and nails bored through the red cloth. Then his countenance cleared, he leaned forward and spoke mysteriously: "I bring you the message," he said, and laid his hand on his breast, "I bear the sin of all time. In me is the truth. Don't you know me? I am the saviour of our time. I am he," he whispered. There was no doubt possible. The man was mad. He thought he was Judas.

At that moment the whir of an aeroplane, coming over the garden, slammed through the heated air. He listened an instant and drew his hand across his forehead. "Long live the world revolution," he shouted with a sudden inspiration, and left the speaker's stand, perfectly self-controlled, bowed for Dolly Mikailovna and asked her to unveil the statue.

Dolly Mikailovna rose, and the Jew placed a cord in her hand. Tugging at it a couple of times, she made the cover fall off a figure, rusty red in colour, and as yet only in plaster. It was a superhuman size, naked, and the face, which resembled the Commissar's, was turned threateningly toward heaven, while the hands with a passionate movement sought to remove a piece of real hempen rope around the neck.

When the apostle was seen the band pompously struck into the Internationale, and we rose and

bared our heads, overwhelmed by the power of the music. At the other end of the garden, three shots in quick succession were fired from the field piece. They were not blanks. The shells went over our heads with a devilish whistle and rush that made me tremble, and God knows where they ended. I heard the Red Jew say something to Dolly Mikailovna, after which he embraced her and kissed her on the mouth.

Before I had any idea what was coming she had turned toward me and I felt her body, soft as elastic, in my embrace, and the odour of her rank powder in my nostrils while her moist blood-red lips closed over mine as a lukewarm sea. For a moment the heat seemed to burst into flames. Since my look didn't express the proper comprehension, Dolly Mikailovna laughed at me and, turning to the man next to her, gave him the kiss, which then went from mouth to mouth. I felt weak in the knees and sick. I nearly had a sunstroke in this open place with the sun on my head. I almost staggered over behind the apostle in the dark of the cypresses.

When the coolness of night came on, the dancing began. A few lanterns gleamed in the trees, but they soon went out. Only the dancing floor was illuminated, an arclight threw its moon whiteness on the expressive figure of the statue. People were scattered in the dark garden. It was a gorgeous summer night. The waltz beats of the kettle-drums sounded like a bit of noise somewhere on the earth,

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but from space came the great tone of silence. Far above our heads, in the blue firmament of night, the lights of heaven quivered in a gentle dance, the eternal Internationale of the stars.

## *Russian Bourgeoisie*

*Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?*

Villon

ONE evening in the spring of 1917, I dined in the home of a Russian princess in Petrograd. At the time that was an experience which was worth while accepting. The table was set with white damask, with roses, and Sèvres ware, crowned and monogrammed. The tapers in the heavy silver candelabra lit a golden glow in the massive tableware. Four costly glasses stood at each couvert and *Château la Rose* and *Louis Roederer* and sweet Crimean wine were poured by Tartar lackeys with heads shaved as naked as eggs. Officially there was prohibition in the land and the common people had only home-made alcohol and furniture polish to drink. The fish was a sturgeon that reached half the length of the table and the ice was modelled in the form of a Troika whose team bore real small silver bells that tinkled as the cook in snow white garb and high cap carried it around.

After the dinner the small company gathered in a rococo salon papered and upholstered in light red where all that was soft was silk and the rest carved and inlaid wood, bronze, marble and malachite. The place was full of bric-a-brac in glass cabinets

and on the walls hung French etchings where the ladies bared their breasts, and wherever there was room stood replicas in bronze of both antique and modern works of art. Aphrodite and the Discobolus, Apollo and Laocoon, Voltaire and Napoleon, "Courage," "The Dance," "The Swimmer," and "Two Beings," costly souvenirs from the finest fancy shops of the capitals of Europe and an entire art museum en miniature.

Among the guests was a physician, Dr. Taube, a Baltic citizen by birth but now residing in one of the cities on the Volga where I understood he combined a university post (he was a pharmacist) with the possession of a drug store and various industrial enterprises. We had a lively conversation. He gave me many enlightening details of the presumable causes of the recent revolution and the abdication of the Tsar and spoke with enthusiasm of the continuation of the war and with confidence of the will and ability of the Entente and America to help Russia. To be sure the internal conditions were not of the best, that he admitted openly, but it was not too much to hope that the emerging Kerensky, who undoubtedly was a genius at leadership, before long would have demonstrated his right to go down in history as the Napoleon of the Russian Revolution! A bridge game broke off this conversation which was very interesting to me, a newcomer, but I saw to it that at the breaking up of the party I accompanied him. Quite as a matter of course we went together to the

nearby embassy palace where he remained for several hours at a cigar and a bottle of wine before he went home to his hotel on the Moika.

I had another fleeting talk with Dr. Taube in Petrograd, then he went away, presumably back to his city on the Volga. Events that individually were as important and fateful as dates in a history textbook followed one upon the other and I doubt if I thought of Dr. Taube at all until I unexpectedly saw him a year later. It was in the month of June, 1918, and in the office of the German Commission in Kazan about the time the Tsar family was murdered in Ekaterinburg.

The Commission which was in Kazan for the special purpose of attending to the repatriation of prisoners of war, was lodged in the home of the German evangelical pastor. The pastor himself had moved up to the top floor with his four grown daughters. In the pastor's study where formerly, at an evening glass of tea, my eyes had rested on lithographs of Gethsemane and Calvary, on Magdalenes and Marys with tears on their cheeks as large as dove's eggs and on Jesus driving the money changers from out the temple of the Lord, the walls now glared with statistical charts and supersize *Gott strafe England!* caricatures.

Herr Oberleutnant S. besides being an officer was also a Doctor of Laws. He was a real Teuton, blond, sharp-featured as a head of Goethe, stern as a bust of the Iron Chancellor, and with the expression of slight

stupidity fit and proper for a lieutenant. One forenoon I had business with him, I came upon Dr. Taube sitting in the anteroom. The meeting was cordial. Dr. Taube at once asked me if I would help him with the Oberleutnant: the Bolsheviki had nationalized his drug store and he requested now as a buyer in peace time of German medicine *en gros*, the intervention of the German embassy with the Central Soviet in Moscow. I had to cry quits, it was beyond my resources. I heard later that the Oberleutnant was far from gracious, but thanks to the commercial-minded reserve lieutenant who formerly had been a travelling salesman in Russia and who on the nation's and his own behalf was preparing the way for future trade, a telegram regarding Dr. Taube's drug business was after all sent off to "Botschafter" Count Mirbach in Moscow. It must just about have had time to reach his writing table before he met his death at the revolvers of the Social-Revolutionaries.

I was of course invited to visit Dr. Taube. He lived in a fine old corner house where the drug store took up the whole ground floor while the living quarters were on the second story. I went up a white-enameled stairway with red carpets and green palms. A maid in a white cap answered the door and two big greyhounds rose to their feet and looked hospitably at me after having sniffed at my clothes. Dr. Taube's workroom was full of antique furniture. Glass cases with costly medicinal—or was it pharmaceutical?—apparatus met the eye. The walls were

decorated with Chinese swords in carved ivory scabbards, Circassian sabres inlaid with silver, and pistols from Turkestan with massive silver balls at the butt ends. There were also binoculars and high quality English hunting guns, and, taken all in all, everything that a cultivated amateur could find pleasure in owning and a rich man without hesitation could procure for himself.

Dr. Taube set out Havana cigars (he still had several boxes) and a percolator of coffee was brought in. While the grounds were settling we sipped at a genuine cognac. Dr. Taube told me that "la princesse," our hostess of the dinner the year before, had fled to Finland. She had had a large estate in the Tambof not far from a factory owned by Dr. Taube or rather by his wife. He had not long ago had occasion to substantiate the rumour that all the buildings on the estate, even to the schools, had been burnt. Immeasurable damage and loss had occurred. The park had been wrecked, the fish basins of Ural marble were splintered to slivers, the peasants had not left one stone on another of a wonderful little palace done in the style of the Trianon which the princess had built for her thirty-six pet monkeys and which had been an unique example of ingenious accommodation and a source of endless amusement for the guests of the estate. The monkeys they had killed with flails and forks and those caught alive they had hanged and burned with frightful tortures. In the opinion of Dr. Taube, the most incomprehensible



thing about the whole affair was that this senseless frenzy on the part of the peasants had been turned against a lady who as a property owner had done an endless amount of good not only for her own peasants but also among all the peasants throughout the surrounding country. In the good old days she had been simply worshipped in that region.

As to his own future, Dr. Taube was of course much worried. Temporarily he could do nothing at all. If he hadn't had several hundred thousand rubles in ready money laid away he couldn't have existed. His bank account was closed. The factories were deserted and the drug business was nationalized. He had not set foot in his store for four months. It was being managed by his former chief apothecary, a Jew who had been with him for twenty-two years. "For you can't get clever pharmacists in Russia who are not Jews. He'll never be poor," added Dr. Taube. "The stock is worth a million rubles, peace-time exchange, and he and the appointed commissar are briskly selling it underhand."

Dr. Taube no longer had much use for the Entente. And Kerensky he called "the Revolution's great coquette." It was now necessary for Russia to steer a German course. This was also the opinion of the cadet leader, Miliukof, who sat in Kiev with the German Hetman, Skoropadski. He wished that the Germans as soon as possible would also bring order out of chaos in Great Russia. Wilhelm II and his

soldiers would be welcomed as liberators. After all was said and done, there was a real Kaiser! And the Germans, what energy, what organization! They were surely invincible. And Russian culture and Russian citizenry had to seek help from that quarter unless they were to go to pieces under Bolshevism's corrupt and lawless Jew dictatorship.

Dr. Taube was an Anti-Semite. Otherwise he would not have been Russian Bourgeois. The Jews were responsible for all the evil that was happening in Russia and the whole world, for this was only the beginning. Back of everything, the war and the revolution, there was beyond all manner of doubt a great international Jewish pact and gigantic financial conspiracy for the advancement of the world revolution, that would at last put all power into the hands of the Jews. If I would keep it a deep secret he would tell me something: on the second floor he had living a representative for the American Y. M. C. A. This man did not have a thing to do with Christianity. He was in with the Bolsheviki (and for that reason it was a good thing to have him in the house) and he was one of the agents of international Jewdom!—In this Dr. Taube was mistaken. The man was but an ordinary member of the American commercial spy system.

Later we drank tea together with the Doctor's wife. Mrs. Taube was, in spite of having surely passed forty-five, still a handsome woman, particularly when she smiled. She was clad in rustling silk, in her

ears hung a pair of rarely beautiful pearls and on her beautiful hands, which one longed to say were as white as alabaster, she had an expensive collection of clear brilliants and brilliants that sparkled with a rosy gleam in their platinum. Together with a black-clad German companion she occupied a salon distinguished among other furnishings by two Blüthner grand pianos.

Mrs. Taube was apparently unmoved by the serious situation. I believe that it hadn't dawned on her at all as yet. She expected to wake up some morning and then everything would be as in the good old days when she still could walk and drive on the streets of Kazan and the fat policeman would salute her from afar as if she were the commandant of the garrison himself. Now there was only the most frightful rabble on the streets. She told almost flapper-like yet winningly of her tribulations and the constant refrain was; "how terrible, how interesting, and how amusing!" While she babbled, Dr. Taube sat and looked preoccupied,—small, bald and pepper-and-salt and with a melancholy pearl stick pin in his tie.

I also made the acquaintance of young Taube, twenty-two years, their only child. He bore a striking resemblance to his mother. He was a tall, handsome and slightly stout young man with an indolent personality. It was easy to see that his mother loved him boundlessly. When he was in the room she became uncontrollably maternal and at once was no

longer young. She still coddled the son with jam and cakes as well as with pocket money. Her only fear was that something should happen to *him*. He had not been in the war, no doubt he had been exempted because of his medical studies. But even if there were comparative peace and quiet at present, the red day of civil war rose each minute more threatening on the horizon. They were already fighting in the nearest governments. In Jaroslav there had been revolt and White Terror and Red Terror. To keep her son out of all these bloody upheavals was Mrs. Taube's only and sole thought.

A few weeks later the counter-revolution reached Kazan as suddenly as the first bolt of lightning from a black sky. Monday, August 5th, the Czechs took the city by surprise and in the course of a few hours large parts of it were in their hands. An enormous amount of booty was captured, both materials of war and 600 million rubles of Russian and Rumanian money. A White revolutionary organization was hastily formed and crowds of volunteers, White Guards and former officers, suddenly filled Kazan with their unchanged careless youth and arrogance. They were from the very outset smartly decked out once more with epaulets and medals and if possible with white adjutant insignias. They were also to be seen at the cafés, with heavy revolver holsters and patent leather boots, joyous from victory, rattling their sabres and not always wholly sober. In the streets one group after another of captured Bolshe-

viki passed by, of greyish pallor and walking dully between guards who in their hands bore threatening rifles and grenades. They were brought up to the old Kremlin where they were permitted to dig themselves a common grave before they, generally at dawn, were shot. Of all the sights that send cold chills of fear and trembling along a man's spine, none is more chilling than that of our neighbour on the way to his place of execution. In the hotel cellars still other Bolsheviks lurked, hiding their weapons and tearing their red flags into Red Cross arm-bands. The guests who fled down there when the Red aeroplanes came and bombed the city, turned timorously back from the deathly pale people who, by the gleam of a few candles, rooted in the corners and stowed large and heavy Belgian pistols and ammunition away, while they drove off fear by tippling.

Before the gates of the Kremlin lay for four days the body of a Lett, who just as the famous actor bore the name of *Kean*, but probably had spelled it differently. The women shouldered each other to lift the cloth from his face. His boots had been pulled off and the naked feet grew day by day more yellow until they at last began to be blue. A note had been put on the corpse upon which there stood laconically: *Kommandant goroda*: i. e., the City Commandant! The rain had made the ink run. I had known him well and while not exactly a model official, he had been an obliging and courageous fellow who had done no more harm in his position than he had found

strictly necessary. Every afternoon he had driven around the city in a smartly drawn carriage, leaning comfortably back in a corner with one leg over the other and a short briar pipe between his teeth. He was never without it and in Russia it contributed to giving him a foreign and therefore cultivated air.

After the first days of street fighting and excitement and shooting on the river and from the air, came the turn of the clerical processions. At the head was the famous Virgin of Kazan and they had dragged the holy banners and the golden ikons out of all the churches and wandered with choir boys and censors, Metropolitan and priests in golden cloaks and violet caps around in all the streets but not in the Tartar quarter, followed by immense crowds of people with white brassards on their arms. Then came the funerals of the Czecho-Slovaks who had fallen, officers and White Guards. Sad funeral marches on wind instruments, many many open coffins whose lids were carried before the wagons by undertakers in white blouses, and again priests, military and people in dense crowds. And incessantly the dull firing from afar. The Czechs and the volunteers were fighting with the Bolsheviki for the possession of the Romanoff Bridge a little west of the city. But they did not cross.

What I myself experienced the following three or four months would take too long to relate and has no place here. The Bolsheviki reconquered Kazan. At that time I was already in Siberia. And to Si-

beria fled also Dr. Taube with his family. Whether they sensed the danger in time or felt themselves insecure in any case in Kazan because of their little affair with the German Commission, I know not. The fact remained, they went to Samara and when the Volga front had to be abandoned they flowed with the stream of refugees to the Siberian cities. In the early part of 1919 they popped up in Tomsk where I was vice consul.

I met Dr. Taube on the street and this time was not surprised. Nothing was strange any more and the world was no longer as large as it had been. Dr. Taube told me that they had left their home as it had been when I was there, and only provided with the necessary clothes and a sum of cash money. The companion had remained behind. She had diamonds from Mrs. Taube's diadems and collars sewed away in her black gown.

I was going to pay them a visit but changed my mind. They lived, I knew, in extremely straightened circumstances with one of the city's druggists. I was afraid that the severe change from the surroundings in which Mrs. Taube had last received me, would be painful for her. However I was mistaken. The truth generally is that the very rich who have known and owned all of life's visible pleasures, find it much easier to go without things than those who haven't had the daily necessities, and if what I've heard isn't true, then it ought to be: that here in the city during the war a woman died of grief because



she couldn't get coffee! Mrs. Taube bore her poverty and the Siberian cold good naturedly. She was rarely seen on the streets, but one day I met her. She wore a sable fur coat and had a woollen shawl around her head like a peasant woman. The smile in her eyes still contained the same charming silliness and she was of the opinion that it would not be long before they again were back in Kazan.

But nevertheless Dr. Taube had his troubles with her. That I gathered from his conversation when I met him in street or café. She was afraid that her son would be mobilized and when that fear came over her she became quite hysterical. At last Dr. Taube by much energy and influential acquaintances succeeded in postponing the catastrophe and had their son placed in a sinecure position in the Red Cross administration. But how long would that last? He himself had been mobilized and could expect to be sent to the front as a military physician. The Kolchak Government sent out one decree after another which promised the most severe measures, summary court-martial, against those officers and doctors who occupied secure and superfluous positions back of the front. And the front suffered frightfully from lack of doctors. The hospital trains came all the way to Tomsk, many days' ride, jammed full of wounded, nearly all young peasant boys, ridiculously young because those in power had not dared to mobilize the older men who once had helped to tear the shoulder straps off their officers and disarm them.



And before they reached their destination, the severely wounded had been changed into stinking bundles of filth and gangrene, vermin and pus, oftentimes swarming with maggots. My splendid friend, Dr. Belan, an Austrian regimental surgeon who directed one of the Russian military hospitals and who cut away with saw and knife of what there came, often assured me quite overcome that only Russians could live in the state of putrefaction in which he received them on the operating table. So bad was it that in some cases their bandages were of newspapers! "And the place is overrun with Sisters enough, too," he added, "and disreputable every one!"

I often saw young Taube on the street but he apparently didn't care very much about knowing me. He was in uniform of course, though without marks of rank or revolver. On his arm was the Red Cross brassard. He was often—on foot or in sleigh—in the company of a not quite young but wonderfully beautiful nurse whose velvet black eyes glinted dangerously under the coquettishly demure nun's head-dress. One day about 2 o'clock when we were already in the first part of June, Dr. Belan came unexpectedly to me. He brought me the terrible news that young Taube had been shot by a Russian during a brawl. The unfortunate man had received a bullet in the thigh, one in the stomach and one in the face. The other had wounded himself in the shoulder. They had both been brought into Belan's hos-

pital but on the operating table Taube had breathed his last. Dr. Belan, who knew the Taubes, was as depressed by the occurrence as it is possible to be when one has a wife and two children in far-off Vienna and has spent five years of war imprisonment in Siberia. He paced back and forth across the office floor. Suddenly he gritted his teeth loudly and hissed: "The scoundrels! The hellish scoundrels! They know how to mobilize the innocent, ignorant cattle from the villages. They take them from their mothers before they have barely left the breast, drive them to the front before they can use a rifle and let them fight for those who sent them and for the holy reinstatement of Tsarism and dissolute priest dictatorship and for the bank account, the knout, vodka and corruption. The scoundrels know how to do all that and dare to do it. Then they sit back of the front with bottles and cards and an arm around the waist of a girl and this is something they have to do even if they are to die for it, and so rather die for a common wench than for the poor fellows who for their sake are rotting from wounds and typhus a thousand miles from their mother's village. They are not worth the death of a louse and here a whole land and a continent and a half is wading in blood because a handful of charlatans on each side dare to misuse their power. And they go unpunished. If God cannot and he evidently can't, would that Satan himself would perceive that this is not even wickedness but only pure raw stupidity and let plague strike

all who in this land force people who are no wiser than cattle and no more full of hate to bear weapons against one another!" Dr. Belan had become pale and at the close quite hoarse. He was otherwise a quiet man who talked very little and then in short choppy sentences. He sat down and for a long time remained quite still and then left me with a nod of farewell.

There were only a few people at the funeral. Mrs. Taube stood close by the coffin. Her husband supported her. Her cheeks were completely swollen but she wept no more. She would never be young again! The doctor had become smaller, it seemed to me, and quite white at the temples. But there was on the other hand a peace in his face that I had not seen there the last time I talked with him. Perhaps his grief after all could not outweigh that burden of which he had been relieved in so frightful a manner.

After the burial I spoke to them. Dr. Taube was preoccupied and neither could I find anything to say to him. To Mrs. Taube I bowed and as is the custom in Russia kissed her white hand that even now with its very few rings was more beautiful than any hand I have seen.

A short time after I left Tomsk.

## *Alexander and Ivan*

**I**N Tomsk I had a prisoner of war as coachman. According to his papers he was a Rumanian, Sandor Barkas by name, and hailing from some hamlet in Hungary. He was thrown in when I bought a carriage, a sleigh and a black trotter from a Dano-Russian in whose service he had always been known as Alexander, and Alexander he continued to be with me.

Alexander was faithful and good and a simpleton who just grasped the fact that it was not to his advantage to appear less obtuse than he really was. Beyond taking care of the horse, hitching, unhitching, and driving, he understood nothing, nor did that perturb him. Once when he had been sent off with a telegram he was arrested before he had pierced the mysteries of sending it, because of his passive but lengthy scrutiny of life about the telegraph station. I had the greatest trouble getting him released. Since then he was allowed to stay at home when he wasn't driving. Even there he might have been useful, he might have scrubbed the floor, tended the samovar or things like that, but this was women's work which was far below his dignity. He didn't refuse flatly, but it was something he wasn't accustomed to do, he assured me in one of the few Russian phrases he had learned because of their indispensa-

bility and usefulness during his four years of war imprisonment. To all remonstrances he only smiled and shook his head, not at all defiantly, but engagingly and indolently. It wasn't possible to pronounce the Russian language clearly enough or well enough for his ears. He spoke Rumanian if I wished anything besides "hitch" and "unhitch," "to the left" or "to the right." Roughness towards him only brought black looks of anger or tears that filled his brown eyes, making them shine like red mahogany, and he let it be understood that rather than endure being treated in an undignified manner he would let himself be separated from the horse and sent back to camp. But I didn't want to part with Alexander. For how was I to find among the six thousand prisoners of war in the camp one who would be better and not many times worse than he? And although the horse was a handsome animal to look at, wasn't it full of hidden faults which only Alexander knew and could take into consideration?

When I think of Alexander I usually see him sitting on his favourite stool in the kitchen with an empty dish before him. With a correct appraisal of what sort of master I was, he had long ago ceased to rise when my path lay through the kitchen, which it often did to spare him the trouble of the main entrance with its double doors and four bolts. From his place he caressed with a glance, though completely phlegmatically, the Russian girls who, in skirts amply tucked up and always good-naturedly,

scrubbed, washed, cooked and split wood around him, and who besides that, as a pure matter of course, looked after his well-being, handed him full dishes, took away empty ones, swept under him and fished coal out of the oven for his pipe.

All night from nine to nine, and if the chance offered itself also a couple of hours in the afternoon, Alexander spent back of the oven on his pallet where he shared sleeping quarters with Drusjok, the dog, and Koschka, the cat. The back of that oven, when fully occupied, was an awe-inspiring zoological locality. Its tufts of hay and nondescript rags Alexander, deaf to every admonition, always left in the same picturesque disorder in which they had been when he last crawled into them.

Despite the golden days which Alexander might have been said to have with me, both from the standpoint of war imprisonment and the general condition of Russian servants, he was neither grateful nor satisfied. This is, after all, as I have only too often discovered, the wages of goodness and naïveté. A *Barin* who is not brutal and, to a certain degree, callous, disappoints those expectations one has a right to have about him. Furthermore Alexander had hardly been in the camp at all during his imprisonment, but had worked for private individuals outside it, so that undoubtedly the idea of an existence behind the barbed wire, freed from all annoyances and duties and entirely wedded to sweet inactivity, appealed strongly to his imagination. But

there were always the risks of being set to shoveling snow, or burying dead, yes even of being sent to work in the coal mines or of being dealt out to one of the many horse transports that ran up and down the Line, from Tjellabinsk to Irkutsk and back again. They were left to shift for themselves for long weeks and exposed to a devilish cold when the cars were empty, a cold that froze the fingers and toes off the unfortunate prisoners. If it hadn't been for this, then the dream of the real idyllic loafer's life had surely coaxed Alexander into the camp long ago.

It would, however, have been an over-estimate of Alexander's faculties to believe that it was the fear of the dangers of camp life which alone held him back. But Alexander had a friend, a prisoner and a Rumanian himself, even from the same village, and without the advice and consent of this considerably older associate it did not occur to Alexander to attempt anything. Ivan—for that was the name of Alexander's friend in his Russian existence—was Alexander's one fixed point in the quicksands of war imprisonment, the only palpable thing, therefore the strongest tie which bound him to life in the past and to the village at the foot of the Carpathians, and the only person with whom he could really converse. To Ivan, Alexander was a child from home, needing his advice and care, both in daily life where all kinds of accidents and mistakes lay in wait for a defenceless prisoner of war, but more particularly when that day in the fullness of time should come when



they were to go back. For who could ever think that Alexander would have either initiative or understanding enough to find his way home alone! And, finally, Ivan had in Alexander a companionable refuge which he would not willingly relinquish. Therefore he watched over him and advised him against going to the prison camp, at any rate as long as he, Ivan, had not been put there.

Ivan and Alexander had had the marvellous luck of being captured only eight days after the outbreak of the war when as Hungarian Hussars they rode patrol across the Russian border. Even at that time Ivan had shown talents which had quite won the heart and admiration of the dull-witted Alexander. During their imprisonment they had become separated, but by a miracle they had met each other again in Tomsk.

As foolishly stupid as Alexander was, so happily endowed was Ivan. He always came out on top. No prison, no fence could hold him. Not that he ever fled; anything so simple as that would really not have been worthy of admiration. He obtained his release by his personality. If he were caught now and then and put in camp, he didn't get downhearted, but smiled unweariedly at the Russians with his snow-white teeth as if he never had been any happier. Even the sternest of prison guards couldn't resist the temptation to talk with him, and his frank manner and entertaining qualities also won entry for him in higher places. In the course of several days he was



always free again and had hold of the better end of some fat job.

From his appearance one would not easily have deemed Ivan the possessor of any ability whatsoever, and especially not the ability to respond charmingly. He didn't at all resemble the handsome, slightly stout Alexander who, for the sake of the women if for nothing else, kept himself looking tidy in my cast-off clothes. Ivan was hideous, a tramp without as within. You could have put anything at all on him, and he would still have looked what he was, a dirty Balkanese of doubtful Romanic extraction but with a Hunnish squash nose, a gleam of violated Jewdom in his eyes and a thick stream of real Gipsy blood vagabonding under his yellow skin.

Ivan's secret, the definition of his lucky star during his Russian imprisonment, was not to be found in anything external, but could only be discovered on closer acquaintance. Ivan was a drunkard. This much one could see at once from his sodden buffoon face, reddish purple even to his ears under the jet-black shaggy hair. But what one couldn't see was the almost magical relationship that existed between him and alcohol. Where Ivan was, there was also liquor. As a willow wand is said to point to water, so Ivan pointed to pure alcohol. What more precious endowment could there be for self-preservation in war-ravaged Russia where the springs of alcohol were either plugged or only ran expensively and sparingly. Though a wretched prisoner of war, Ivan

could move from place to place free as a bird, everywhere sure to create and meet sympathy, conquering all, whether they were Red or White, officers, commissars, city dwellers or peasants, priests or heathen, by his spiritual good nature and the Dionysian graciousness which streamed from him and surrounded his person with an aura of more than rank odour, fatally attractive to even the weakest Russian sprout of the vice of drunkenness.

One would think that Ivan's passion for drink would have been contagious to a character as weak and as poorly endowed as Alexander's. But such was not the case, perhaps because Ivan's exterior served as a horrible example, and perhaps because Ivan's tactics with Alexander were the very opposite of those he used with the Russians. One might suppose that he considered it his mission, while attending to his own requirements, to fill the Russians full of the greatest possible quantity of liquor and in this way repay his early capture by an offensive which often caused the Russians larger losses than whole Austrian battalions. But he watched keenly that the fiend of drunkenness didn't enter into Alexander, and gave him not a single drop of the strong fluids which Alexander was far too simple to secure for himself.

Ivan's path of life in Russia had, as may be imagined, led through the most variegated professions and the most fantastic occupations, which, however, were always entwined with the real red thread of his

existence. For instance, just to mention something which I could corroborate on the spot, he had come to the city with steamer via Tobolsk from Omsk in the service of the representative of a Caucasian wine company that had a branch in Tomsk. With him he stayed until the wares were sold and the store closed. Then he had secured a place as prisoner of all work in the local branch of the Russian Red Cross whose most important, and as far as I could see, only problem for a long time was to apportion and grant requisitions for wines and spirits on the former public stores to foreign consuls, officials and officers in the service of the Kolchak government and favoured private individuals with certificates of weak health. When this opportunity failed, because the commandant of the garrison took over this lucrative duty, Ivan got a place as kitchen man in the Officers' Club. But from washing glasses and dishes, he quickly advanced to being the right hand man of the host by procuring spirits and vodka from secret private supplies, and he was soon the glad favourite of the guests. With his wit, his festive face, and the bandy walk of his thin drunkard's Hussar legs, he had only to show himself to make loud laughter resound at the crowded much bespattered card tables. This job Ivan lost when scandals and the need for barracks caused the Officers' Club to be suddenly forbidden and disbanded.

One evening after the catastrophe, as he sat with Alexander in the kitchen by the oven, on top of which

he had spent the last nights after politely secured permission, I took the opportunity to talk with him.

After he had thanked me warmly for the kindness he had enjoyed in the house, and had praised Alexander both as a friend and as absolutely irreplaceable in everything pertaining to horses, had, altogether, given the seated and indifferent Alexander an eloquent course in politeness and good policy, he told me that he had secured a place as hired man for a *pope* or priest and as *zvonik*—bell ringer—at one of the larger churches of the city. In all likelihood he would only have to avail himself of my hospitality this one night more.

However, Ivan's optimism showed itself to be unwarranted in this instance. During the execution of his new duties he was overtaken by his fate. Presumably he had had more important things to do for the *pope*, and had not taken the necessary precaution of acquainting himself with the technicalities of the art of bell-ringing. Moreover, he was unused to working so high in the air, and poorly suited for it. That must have been why he came to spoil Easter Monday for a large congregation. The bells suddenly ceased to sound, and the faithful wakened from their stupor and began to wonder what could have happened. When the matter was investigated, Ivan was found lying in the belfry. By a false swing one of the bells had struck him in the head. On the *pope's* humane initiative, the stricken man was

brought to the Consulate. When Alexander saw them carrying Ivan, he grew chalky white and began to tremble and shake. I had the horse hitched up, and we galloped away for the Austrian hospital surgeon at the camp, but when he had examined Ivan's wound he merely shook his head and wondered that such a fellow could have permitted himself to become so amply alcoholized, when the Russians could not even see their way to procure enough alcohol for the hospital dispensary. Ivan had only a very little hole in his head, but, without regaining consciousness, his clear and merry spirit in the course of several hours trickled out of it into the enigmatical nothingness of space.

Some days after the burial, Alexander asked if he might go to the bath. This permission he got and also the extra couple of rubles which it would cost. He never came back. The next morning his place in the kitchen was empty, and the dog and the cat who huddled shivering in each corner of the bed sent great melancholy glances toward the door. The rags had disappeared and Alexander's little green wooden chest, his nicked stump of mirror, his comb and pipe and the three postcards that had been nailed up on the wall, all representing Alexander in his Hussar uniform, were gone too. It was quickly discovered that he had reported to the camp. After the usual eight days of solitary arrest, allotted to prisoners who couldn't or wouldn't account for where they had been and with what permission, he had

moved into the several square yards of regulation wooden berth which was due him in the barracks. Although Alexander was far from having conducted himself as he should, I respected his decision which only sorrow and perplexity at Ivan's death had made him take. Neither did I consider it possible in the long run to defend him against his own fatuousness without Ivan's influence.

Here my record of Ivan and Alexander would have ceased, had I not three or four months after these events found it necessary to go to Kalscheigin, a good day's journey away from Tomsk. A Bolshevik scouting party had attacked the coal mines there by surprise, and for a period of twenty-four hours had taken possession of them. They had given short shrift to the higher officials together with those Cossacks and Czechs of the guarding party whom they succeeded in capturing, but unfortunately they didn't get the worst extortionists and torturers in the mine management, who, as usual, escaped the just punishment of their inhuman brutality and robbery of the labouring prisoners of war. Only a very few of the prisoners had joined the band and gone off with them. The majority had turned a deaf ear to all the agitation and had declared through their spokesman that although the sympathy of the prisoners was certainly on the side of the Bolsheviks, the cost of joining them had been learned through all too terrible experience. Wherefore they only wished to be left in peace, and otherwise to be allowed to go home

again now that the war, by the grace of God, was over in Europe. This answer the Bolsheviks accepted, though reluctantly, and then retired to the open country and to the *Taiga*, the wild Siberian, primeval forest where White reprisals did not dare to follow them.

No sooner were they gone than the White relief body made its appearance, struck down among the prisoners, swung the *nagaika*, held inquisitions and summary courts, and, although it was well known that those who had helped to murder the officials had fled with the Bolsheviks, yet for the sake of an example four or five men, thought to have Bolshevik sympathies, were condemned to death and shot on the spot after having dug their own graves.

It was the rumour of these events which called me to Kalscheigin in the company of a French officer whom I desired to convince of the ill treatment and undernourishment to which the prisoners of war were constantly subjected in these notorious mines. We had finished our visit to the mine manager and the commissariat manager, two mealy-mouthed scoundrels whom it would have been a cold-blooded pleasure to place before a row of rifle barrels. Under the guidance of the Cossack Commandant we had come to the damp, earthy hovels where the prisoners had their quarters, when, at the very entrance, a ragged figure, shy and round-shouldered, wormed himself out of our path. I was quite moved at recognizing Alexander. Of his red cheeks and clear skin, there



was nothing left. His eyes glowed with a feverish expression in the middle of his pale, stubbled face. I confess it was with a curious terror I recognized in the terrible rags hanging on his once well nourished body, garments which had formerly clothed me. For this reason only, tears were near my eyes, although I also felt a real sorrow that poor Alexander had ended in this horrible prison hell. But all I could do was to surprise the Frenchman and the Cossack by shaking Alexander's hand, and talking to him as to a little child. He knew me, but I could see that I was almost an entire stranger to him. He tried to smile and to show that he had good courage, but it wasn't much of a success. Then he asked if the horse was along, and when he was answered in the negative, he became dull to all questions and seemed to feel relieved when I left him.

All I could do for Alexander was to ask the Cossack to put him to some work where he would be around horses. I asked it as a personal favour. But such an extraordinary wish for the sake of a prisoner of war has not much likelihood of being understood or carried out by a Russian Cossack, and perhaps least of all when he has with really flattering and affable ease assured you—*tschestno slovo*—on his word of honour, that he is at your service.

But even if he did keep his promise, Alexander is not sure to have been saved. He was, after all, one of those who, left to his own devices, was doomed to remain out there.



## *The Flight Through Siberia*

WHAT record will history ever have of the crash of the counter revolution in Siberia, of the flight from west to east along the Siberian railway. The press was not there. It sat in Fiume and read the false Caesarian proclamations of the aesthetic Dictator or peeped platonically from the Finnish border into the erstwhile holy but now dark red Russia. Those who witnessed it and who now from Siberia turn back to the world will not particularly feel like writing; they will have all the mental conditions for forgetting quickly, for there is nothing that is so quickly wiped out as the experience of the great absolute fear. The historians of the future will find few documents to peruse. The supply of paper intended for the archives becomes minute when a government, an army and a civilian population cling to the thin, insecure thread of the Trans-Siberian Railway in thirty degrees of cold, Réaumur. Those who died in Siberia, died in silence therefore in more than one sense. The snow fell, and the white waste took into its great merciful oblivion all that during the flight fell and remained lying.

When it began I too was out there on the Trans-Siberian line and despaired of getting home. As usual, as long as I had not yet decided to go, I was

ruled by the bright optimism of mankind, the instinct of self-preservation in the face of all danger, without which there would not now be a living person in Russia—in Siberia. But when the decision had once been taken, when I dared to begin to count the days, I was at once overcome with nervousness. Perhaps the right moment had already passed? Perhaps all would collapse around me today, tomorrow and I grew weak-kneed when I thought of the prospect of remaining for years more in this Russian Hell. If I had wished for adventures this desire was now dead in me, and if there had been moments when life or death had been matters of indifference to me, there was now within me an awakened perception of how aimless it would be to let myself be butchered in a struggle which, strictly speaking, did not concern me at all. My anxiety was exaggerated: I got out in time. The great collapse, as I had rightly calculated, did not come until several months afterwards. But I was four weeks in getting through to Kharbin and during that time was not out of my clothes. I slept on the bare boards of a dirty box car in company with two Russian *popes* and several officers' families from Tomsk. When I came to Kharbin and in the palatial home of Consul Jacobsen (East Asiatic Company) sat down to a table set with white damask, silver and sparkling wine glasses, while Chinese servants carried around the exquisite French cooking, I pinched my arm and thought of my box car down at the railway station where the remains of a Manchu-

rian hen, roasted with entrails and all, still lay, and of the fact that I had not had a bath in four weeks.

The coming of the collapse itself I didn't see and yet, in those days I was in doubt, I had, without the use of special visionary faculties, deep presentiments of what was to occur and which it was my earnest effort not to have to see: the retreat of the Whites along the Siberian railway.

But I also saw more than mere vision, because the defeat of the Kolchak Government was not only in every man's expectation (although he put the conception of flight away as being hard to realize), it lay also in conditions and actual circumstances which met the eye. It lay on the tracks in unending rows of cars without locomotives and beside the tracks in overstrained and foundered trains and in burned station buildings. Those were days when we almost incessantly passed the skeletons of locomotives and cars that the Bolshevistic guerilla bands had succeeded in derailing or blowing up despite the guarding of the railway by the Czecho-Slovaks and other Entente troops. Since the big Bolshevik battles in 1918 all the small bridges had been rebuilt, but the mighty steel bridges over the large rivers were still in a sad condition after the blowing up; some of them gaped in the empty air with torn arches while first a trial locomotive and then the train itself crept over a makeshift pole bridge alongside. As the great army in 1812 were forced to retreat over its old battle fields so the White Army had to retire on a rail-

way line that along its whole length gave the impression that a fleeing host had just vanished where the tracks met on the horizon. As far as misfortune is concerned, this Siberian retreat need hardly pale in comparison with Napoleon's.

The Kolchak Government was still in Omsk but it was hard pressed by the Bolsheviki. It was a question only of weeks when the Whites would have to abandon the capital of West Siberia after having in the course of the last six months lost the eastern and third part of European Russia. From Omsk in summer there are three ways out, to the rear and to the sides; one to the north along the river Irtisch to Tobolsk and Tomsk: that way the Bolsheviki fled in the spring of 1918 when they were surprised by the Czecho-Slovaks but it was cut off for the Whites by the fall of Tomsk. To the south the river flows to Semipalatinsk but that way ends blindly in Mongolia. The third, middle and easterly way is the Trans-Siberian Railway through Irkutsk to the east. This line of retreat was practically speaking the only one that offered itself to the Whites and even so only for a restricted portion of them. By the fall of Omsk the closest populated and the richest part of west Siberia was cut off from the east. Therefore it was an assured fact that to the railway would stream in motley confusion not only the remains of the defeated army and government, but also the plain civilian population and the officers of the garrisons in the back country in so far as they were able to get

through, the officials and their families, the foreign consuls and missions who had not already saved themselves, and all the thousands who for the last half year had been constantly fleeing from their homes in Russia and for whom the signal now sounded again. The miserable trains that even in those times when there was no danger near got slowly under way because of lack of coal and missing or mislaid reserve parts, would be stormed by frantic masses of humanity. Omsk is being "evacuated!" The word has no meaning for us, may we never live to see the day that Copenhagen shall be evacuated to Ringsted. For the last two years Russia has been in constant evacuation. I was in Moscow when the Bolsheviks in fear of the Germans evacuated Russia's gold to Kazan, and in Kazan when it was unloaded. I was in Omsk when the Whites brought in the same gold, captured in Kazan and under Cossack guard from the railway station to the bank. And on the journey out parts of the treasure passed me on the way to Irkutsk.

The railway from Omsk to Irkutsk goes through the following points of importance: Novo-Nickolaevsk, Taiga (where the local branch from Tomsk meets the main line), Marinsk, Krasnojarsk and Nisjne Udinsk. In normal times the distance can be covered in three days and nights. I was three days in travelling approximately 2000 kilometers and I spent four days in a railway station waiting for a train. Those who suffer from waiting room impa-

tience have material for reflection. I have at times sat back to back with a Russian soldier for twenty-four stiff hours by the clock and waited for a train which would come no one knew when and if it came no one knew whether it would start again for a while. But four days is my record.

Along the section Omsk-Novo-Nikolaevsk over eighty trains had been run together in a clump outside of the last named city and did not turn a wheel. The mail trains were two days in covering thirty kilometers. Endless rows of coaches, most of them without locomotives were piled up. For the few engines that were to be found coal was lacking, or it was impossible to get them over to a water tank. On the other side of Novo-Nikolaevsk there were fewer trains but always a half score at the larger stations. And in Nisjne Udinsk and just outside of Irkutsk they were again piled up until they at last formed an interminable park. There was no one that entertained the slightest hope that they ever would run again. It was doing a great deal to keep tracks open for the most unpostponable trains. As we never stopped less than twelve hours at a station I had occasion enough to see what was contained in all these trains. It was veritable migration on wheels. Yes, migration, this text book fact, about which there is so little in the history books, takes place now every day between Petrograd and Vladivostok and can be studied here in the field without special need of *Monumenta Germanica* and other source works. The set-

ting is slightly different from the Middle Ages, but the reality is the same. History is the history of of man and mankind is always mankind.

Most of the groups by far were composed of refugees from the abandoned districts west of the Ural mountains: Perm, Jekaterinburg, Krasno-Ufmsk, Ufa, Orenburg. But refugees from west Siberia (Tjellabinsk, Kurgan, Tjumen) had also gotten through. How many of them there were, taken all together, will be cleared up some time when statistics of those who fled before the Huns also is produced. But it will be a six ciphred number. They all live on the Siberian Railway if they have not by some miracle found an asylum in the already overcrowded cities. The trains they live in are beyond power of description. The Siberian rolling stock is very primitive. Coaches divided into classes are a rarity. They have been burned or are the dwelling places of the staffs of the foreign troops. Even the mail trains often ran with only one third class coach and the rest of the cars the so-called "Tjepluskas"—"Heated cars," built during the war and only different from our cattle cars of the poorest type in that they can be heated by the passengers themselves if the stove has not been stolen, as it nearly always has. They are otherwise quite good cars when there aren't too many people in them; I have travelled some ten thousand kilometers in these box cars.—But in refugee trains I have not travelled; their like has hardly been seen before. They were composed of cars that



elsewhere would have been sold for old iron long ago. It was easy to see why the evacuating military and the administrations had let them stand as unserviceable. Many were splintered from collisions they had sustained, others bore marks of the Bolshevik war of the year before in the form of scars from bomb explosions. The common man had jammed together what remained after the official evacuation and at last he had even managed to get a rusty locomotive to run. Since the flight began, that is for from two to six months these trains ran and stood on the Line. By thousands, people lived in them, generally families with lodgers. In vain one asked himself what had caused these swarms to leave house and home. The upper class or even the plain well-to-do citizens were not represented. They had fled also, of course, but lived parasite-like in military hospital trains. They did not sit in refugee cars. Here one saw first of all those who were forced to flee: officials and their families. Then teachers and office people. But numerous labourers and peasants were also along. Often the Tjepluska was quite comfortably arranged, the conjugal bed was made up with large featherbeds, there were pictures on the sooty walls and of course the samovar was boiling on the table. In the cars I have seen all sorts of articles for cheer and usefulness in the home: pianos, graphophones, canary birds, chamber pots, carpets, Grandpa in an American rocking chair, families on benches around the table and eating from real tableware. I have



also seen cars with nothing in but people who lay on the filthy floor and scratched themselves for vermin. There were cars where peasant families lived together with their cows and calves and hens, unless they had been so ambitious as to fence off a transport flat-car with branches and hook it to the train. Old broken wagons, lean horses, melancholy cows and indifferent hogs rode along through the thousands of districts and stood through the nights and stared at the strange stars. Perhaps they bore hidden away down in their unfathomable imbecility a question that those who dragged them along never asked themselves—What for—why? Of course it was also fear that drove even the poorest on their way. They followed the stream. They were under the planless suggestion of flight. And they risked so little by fleeing. Poorer than they already were they could hardly become, no matter where they went. Perhaps things would be better there where they happened to stop. The Russian lets himself be moved about so easily and the fatigue of travelling all too easily becomes that permanent siesta, unconcern for the morrow, about which no one knows anyway. His temperament is attracted by the nomadic. The Russian peasant has always been the world's most and furthest travelled. The appetite for migration dwells deep in his prairie nature.

All the station buildings on the Line were pasted over with notes of every size bearing laconic bits of information from and to relatives and friends, who

had become separated from each other and were trying to get together again.

"To Nikolaj Alexandrovitch Baukin. We were here four days. We have gone further on to Marinsk. Baukins."

"Anna! Come to Taiga. I live at the house of Fjodor Petrovitch. Peter died the 27th. Your mother Sofie Sergievna."

Long novels have become old-fashioned and the short story wins the approval of the time. But life itself rises above literary modes and writes interminable novels in an extremely curt style.

In between the fleeing groups other trains stood and waited for further orders. I saw English, Italian, Czech, Polish, Rumanian and Jugo-Slav troop trains, well nourished soldiers in ornamental uniforms, dandified officers with ribbons and crosses and with heavy revolvers hanging at their sides. There were enough soldiers to capture Moscow, if they would fight. But officers and men thought only of getting out while there was time. "We're through fighting. We're not going to let ourselves be killed for the sake of the Russian swine." Most of them sympathized highly with the Bolsheviki, if they would only stay away until they themselves were in safety. There were trains full of unfortunate German and Hungarian prisoners of war for whom the journey again led eastward away from the home that was still in their thoughts, the idyll they had left five years ago and which since then had been greatly beautified in

their longings. The majority were old men who sat silently in the cars and sucked on the faithful briar pipe that had known home, the campaign and imprisonment, or at least had been made by their own hands in the loving image of remembrance. There were dying men among them but they died without outcries. And on every face was the clammy whiteness that tells of an unutterable want and of consuming tuberculosis. What had they not suffered, these people! The soul of pain was in their eyes and in suffering they had become patient, silent, humble. Give them hope and they growl at once. Give them freedom and they begin to hate. Give them weapons and they want to see others suffer. Brutality rises in them as an evil fluid. How often have I not experienced that. These prisoners were to be seen in all these stages along the Line.

And there were trains with cartridges and artillery, trains with flying machines that were never to fly, trains of gypsies whom the good God must have evacuated for no one else had given them a thought. But God loves children and that the majority in these trains were. There were long train loads of Polish Jews who had been fleeing for five years. Ahasuerus beat it by way of the Siberian Railway—tomorrow he fled back again possessed by a new fear. His young daughters sat in the midst of all the wretchedness and in flaming flirtations showed off their aquiline beauty with officers of all nationalities. There were hospital trains that stank of death and carbolic

acid. The wounded were months on the way and they who reached the operating table alive were rotten as corpses brought up from the grave. They who were not dying within the trains, bumped up and down on the running boards outside and were never at rest. There were Japanese trains neat and clean, and full of barrels. Back of the placards with the crimson-beamed sun, the red-collared, yellow men squatted on their haunches and ate rice—they resembled monkeys despite the burnished copper ware. There were trains and more trains with seventeen-year-old recruits on their way to mobilization. No one thought of them any more, they sat long days and spat sunflower-seeds on the track and waited the arrival of an officer or more probably of food. They were still in their peasant clothes and little by little no doubt they ran home to their villages, if they weren't too many hundred miles away. There were trainloads of recruits in Canadian uniforms and with short English rifles; they fought good-naturedly among themselves, played cards and talked confidentially of how one went about being taken prisoner. Good Lord, the oldest of them were not over twenty! And how many thousands of them were not shot as deserters. There were trains with American ploughs with matches and paper; Red Cross trains with Americans aboard; here nothing was lacking and if there was medicine in the first car there was sure to be goods for speculation in the ten following. There were real military trains that slid smoothly through

with the aid of all kinds of distinguished papers that only cost the issuers a little work on the typewriter but gave big money in return; for ladies' silk stockings and French perfume made in Japan were rare wares in Siberia, and yet they are, as all knew who were along, one of the necessities of the war. And mail and express trains were running and seldom arrived the appointed day and when they did come they were overflowing even into the toilet rooms of the first class coaches with people who all travelled on lawful business and who could show fine travelling permits and had paid for their tickets and so forth. And there were always noticeably many Jews with much baggage who travelled westward and noticeably many officers who travelled eastward.

Next in long rows were trains that were loaded only with evacuated institutions: a county court from Bugulma, Perm's consistory, an insurance company from Ufa, tables and chairs, records and typewriters, safes and wastepaper baskets are at rest out in the middle of the Siberian plain. Where will they be put up again and will the ants after all ever turn back to the overturned hive? They will surely. "Go to the ant and be wise," said Solomon. And he meant, no doubt, in regard to mankind.

Of all that one can see on the Siberian Railway Line there is after all nothing so disquieting as the echelons of captured Bolsheviki. When prisoners have been taken and the real Communists and those who by chance are included have been shot, there is

always a whole mob which even the captors are reluctant to shoot. It is unjust that man shouldn't have been endowed with a completely murderous nature. It is indeed a positive pleasure for him to kill, he enjoys seeing his activities rewarded by indisputable results, but emotion demands its right and sets certain bounds. Therefore a certain number of the left-over Bolsheviki were generally put in the army and sent to the front where at first opportunity they went over to the enemy which was quite contrary to the good intentions with which they had been sent. The rest were brought to some camp or other where behind the barbed wire fence they vied with one another in dying of the many different kinds of typhus for which medical science has names but which it is not worth while to be able to distinguish when one never sees a doctor anyway. When the evacuating took place all this wretchedness was also packed together, forty men in each Tjepluska and the train was generally made up of about 1200 prisoners. On the move the cars were sealed, there was only the light which leaked through the cracks. When they stopped the door was opened up on the one side and this side the guard patrolled. Food was given twice every twenty-four hours, rye bread and boiling water. Those who died were gotten out of the way. The survivors buried them themselves. Provisions for the natural functions of the prisoners were also made. Once a day they were brought out in flocks of three hundred on an open field. The guards with their

shiny, bayoneted, and loaded rifles camped around them and the 300 gave from them what they had under the unashamed countenance of God. I watched this sight only once in company with an English officer, long and thin as is his type, all clothes, leather, buttons and straight lines. He said nothing and neither did I speak. Even now so long afterward it seems to me that it was not on earth that I experienced it. It was in Hell—it was the damned who sat as shades and bore testimony before their living fellow-men.

I have often from my railway car talked with these prisoners when an echelon by chance lay on a side track. The majority were dull, others had insanity shining out of their eyes. They seemed about to have fits of rage and to set their teeth in each other's throats. There were also intelligent people and people who only had become thoughtful and silent. I still remember a number of good and not unrefined people who were able to talk plainly and straightforwardly of their misfortunes. And there were also all kinds of people good and bad, the scum of the jails, mere boys, and people who resembled aged men. But with many it was the old story, they had been arrested on suspicion and had been brought along because they had served the Bolsheviki as clerks, drivers, etc., their case was to be looked into and so they were put in camps with the others and now they had been here eight weeks or so and rode from city to city and were received nowhere for lack

of room or fear of contagion. Most of all they feared the coming of winter. "The nights are already cold and we have no covering." Which was the truth, for it was only the richest who had both trousers and shirt. Many were naked and boots I have not seen on a single Bolshevik in these transports.

Where now are all the people I saw then? Now that the cold weather has come, now that the sun rises blood-red through the frost fog in the morning, now that the bare flesh freezes fast on the iron parts of the coaches. Does a jar, a tingling movement go through the many rows of cars? Has that which was awaited so long in anxiety and trembling, but also in hope, come at last? Has the return of the Whites by the Siberian Railway Line begun?



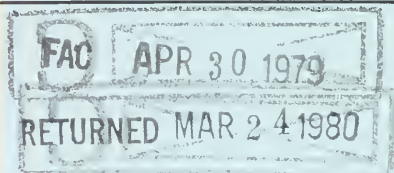






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